SELECTED POEMS OF THOMAS WALSH

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SELECTED POEMS OF THOMAS WALSH

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

GARDENS OVERSEAS
AND OTHER POEMS

THE PRISON SHIPS
AND OTHER POEMS

THE PILGRIM KINGS
AND OTHER POEMS

THE HISPANIC
ANTHOLOGY

THE CATHOLIC
ANTHOLOGY

SELECTED POEMS
OF
THOMAS WALSH

WITH A
MEMOIR BY JOHN BUNKER
AND APPRECIATIONS BY
EDWARD L. KEYES AND MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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THOMAS WALSH

I

About nine o'clock one cold winter night during the War years—it must have been in January or February of 1918—I was sitting in my room on the third floor front of a typical bleak New York boarding-house. Joyce Kilmer and others of the younger writing-men of my acquaintance were either over in France or otherwise called away, so that at this particular time there was in the entire city of New York hardly a single person with whom I was on intimate terms. At any rate I was alone and deeply absorbed in a book when I became dimly conscious that someone was calling my name from the street. The idea was so preposterous that I dismissed it, several times, but finally the noise became so insistent that I opened the window and looked down.

By the light of a street-lamp I could see a figure standing at the curb and looking up at my windows, with a cane hooked over one arm, his hands cupped to his mouth, shouting my name above the din of Broadway traffic. I invited him up, and a few minutes later there walked into the room a stoutish man of distinguished aspect, with clipped moustache, black hair, large, intelligent brown eyes and a general air of prosperity and good liv-

ing. Then I recalled having met him casually some eight months before in Kilmer's office in the *New York Times* Annex. His name was Thomas Walsh—and so began my friendship with one of the most charming and delightful of men.

Soon our meetings became frequent, and in the course of them certain facts about my new friend gradually emerged—that he had published several books of poetry, did a good deal of literary reviewing, lectured occasionally, and had sufficient income to live an independent, leisurely, bachelor life with his sisters and brothers in the old family home in Brooklyn. He had traveled widely and somewhat out of the beaten track—particularly in Spain, to whose people and history he had a veritable devotion.

Certain other facts were longer in coming to light—many that I did not get directly from him, some indeed that I have learned of since his death—such as that he bore degrees in law, philosophy and letters from Columbia, Notre Dame, Georgetown, and Marquette universities and had, moreover, an unusual array of extraterritorial honors. These, awarded for his eminent services in the cause of Spanish culture, comprised honorary membership in the Royal Academy of Letters of Seville—a distinction he shared with only one other American—the rare decoration of the Grand Cross of Isabella Católica, honorary membership in the Academy of Colombia, Bogotá, South America, and honorary membership in the Hispanic Society of America, of which he was also a corresponding secretary.

Besides his native academic honors he had been distinguished also by various American patriotic societies—notably by the Society of the Army of the Potomac, which includes on its roster nearly all of the great names in American poetry and for which he composed and read the poem "Antietam" at the 39th reunion of the society on the battlefield of that name. Of his honorary membership in this society he was particularly proud, as also of his selection to read the ode on "The Prison Ships" at the dedicatory exercises of the Prison Ship Martyrs' Monument on Fort Greene, Washington Park, Brooklyn. This ode was the title poem of his first book, in which his patriotic fervor found additional expression in the poem "Gettysburg."

Many men grow pompous under degrees and decorations, and often the acquirement of an honorary doctorate proves to be, what Henry Adams found the usual result of the acquisition of power—the death of friendship. It is a sufficient commentary on the attitude of the subject of this Memoir towards his various honors to say that, once acquired, he scarcely ever alluded to them, and as for pomposity—no man was ever freer than he of that ludicrous infirmity. Indeed, how could it be otherwise with one who was universally called "Tom" and whose friendships were as strong as they were numerous?

Two elements in my friend's character quickly became evident—his preeminent social gifts and graces and his insistence on personal freedom. He was that unusual specimen in this day and country—a free spirit who had the courage to give exclusive devotion to his intellectual

interests, irrespective of monetary, social, ambitious or other alien considerations. Such things as a definite "job" and regular working hours he absolutely rejected, although there were two notable occasions in his unfettered career when he consented to forego, with certain reservations, his customary freedom—when he joined the editorial staff of the *Catholic Encyclopedia* and, some years later, on the establishment of the *Commonweal*, when he became first assistant editor of that journal—a position he continued to hold till his sudden death on October 29, 1928, at the age of fifty-seven.*

To describe the special quality of Tom Walsh as a friend and companion many epithets come to mind—sophisticated, scholarly, cultured, charming, cosmopolitan; but the word that best sums him up is urbanity—he was very particularly a product of civilized centers: Paris and New York, London and Rome, Washington, Havana, Oslo, Seville, Stockholm, Madrid, Cairo, Constantinople and even less familiar capitals like Kovno and Bogotá. Not only alien cultures of the present day did he seem to absorb into himself, but also those of past ages and far-off civilizations—medieval France, Arabia, Morocco, Italy, Persia and, above and beyond all, Spain.

* *Thomas Walsh was born in Brooklyn, October 14, 1871, the eldest of the seven children of Michael Kavanaugh Walsh and Catherine Farrell Walsh. As a boy he was educated at private schools and at St. Francis Xavier College, New York City, eventually completing his classical studies at Georgetown University, where he was graduated in 1892. Later he studied law at Columbia University and also took English courses under Brander Matthews and George Edward Woodbury.*

Because of his linguistic acquirements, the natural result perhaps of his wide travels, Tom Walsh was enabled to do a tremendous amount of that unselfish and ungrateful labor—translation, and it is beyond question that his versions of many of the Spanish and Spanish-American poets introduced them to their first North American audience. His ties of friendship abroad were numerous and varied, not only in Spain but in England, where even in his college days he was a correspondent of Coventry Patmore and where later he attended the Palace Court salon of Mrs. Meynell as one of the few American friends of that fastidious critic and exquisite artist.

Many of his own poems, of course, were translated into Spanish, along with those of other Americans whose fame he had been the first to herald in Spain. In all this he found a characteristic activity, so that it is no exaggeration to say that he was one of the most noteworthy of our modern American ambassadors of culture.

Various hints of Tom Walsh's multifarious learning would come out appositely from time to time in the course of conversation, but always naturally and unforced as from one who bore his learning gracefully. Curiously enough, however, there was one thing very close to his affections he was never able to explain, and that was the origin or particular circumstance of his love for Spain. It was probably too close to him—too much a natural growth in his heart.

As the fruit of his cultural and linguistic experiences stand, outside of his purely original work, two really

monumental productions: his *Hispanic Anthology,* which is a complete rendering into English of the entire body of Spanish lyrical poetry, from the earliest days down to the present, together with biographical accounts of every poet; and *The Catholic Anthology,* which is the only work in any language that undertakes to present examples of the Christian lyric poetry of every age and every land from the time of Christ down to our own day. In addition to these works of wide scholarship he left in manuscript form several other works of scholarly research, notably a *Life and Times of Fray Luis de Leon,* the famous poet-scholar of Salamanca.

Scholarship, however, and even humanism exert no general appeal. What anyone and everyone could see and feel in Tom Walsh was his extraordinary charm, since in social contacts he was that rare person—a man who was at ease, and who put others at ease, on any stratum. No matter how high or how low, how learned or how ignorant the person to whom he was talking, his manner, if not his matter, was always exactly the same—never did he condescend, never did he pretend to be anything but himself. Indeed, he was in the fullest meaning of the term a citizen of the world—gracious, keen, witty, and full of a most disarming simplicity.

Largely as a result of his gregariousness—he seemed to count that night lost on which he did not "dine out"—Tom Walsh made no secret of his liking for good food and drink. Let me quote on this point from one who was occasionally his guest when visiting New York, the Rev. James J. Daly, S. J.:

"I don't know where he got the inspiration for his life—there was a mellow old-world flavor to it quite alien to native custom—but he succeeded in building a House Beautiful with a touch of exquisite quaintness and a note of distinction. If he was 'Epicurus's own son,' it was without the slightest trace of grossness. There was a Dresden daintiness that surprised away all consciousness of the signs of good living—even at table, where it was a joy to be his guest and to observe his deliberate and nice discrimination. He was not Dr. Johnson when he was eating: but he was when he was garnishing the meal with good talk. His House Beautiful had little garden nooks set apart for light gossip; and his humor could be critical. But it was never mordant or depressing. I always got a lot of fun out of it, because, obviously, he did. There was no bitterness or vindictiveness. His little pungencies about people and things were served with emollients of manner. You could contradict him stoutly without in the least upsetting him. I think he sometimes wished to provoke and enjoy contradiction."

Tom Walsh had the gift of incisive utterance, and no one knew better than he how to take down arrogance and pretension. For instance, there was the case of the conceited youth to whom he was introduced as a fellow poet. "Ah," said the youth, "I did not know there were two poets in the room." "No," replied Walsh, "I did not know there were two poets in the world." On another occasion he was reviewing a book of poetry by a young lady who had some reputation as a religious poet and whose book consisted of a series of very fine devotional

lyrics. Right in the midst of the collection, however, there was a sensational, ultra "sexy" poem in the well-known modern manner, upon which he made the comment that "to find such a poem in such a collection is like coming on a satyr's hoof-print in a convent garden."

Despite his apparent sophistication and his liking for what he called "charming rogues," Tom Walsh's chief admiration was reserved for spiritual and ascetic characters, and he took much pride in the fact that his family-tree could boast of a canonized saint in the person of St. Lawrence O'Farrell. Indeed, this last circumstance was the source of one of his mischievous pleasantries, when he would defend some one or other of his luxurious habits by insisting that it showed a positive sense of ingratitude of the treasury of merits laid up by the saints if there were not frequent withdrawals from the said treasury by easy-going livers like himself.

Of course, pietistic souls were grievously shocked—as he intended they should be—by such talk, and even more scandalized by his spicy stories of clerical japes and ecclesiastical rogueries, wherein always more was implied than met the ear by rolling eyes and uplifted hands. Something of this appears in his narrative and dramatic poems, and if such outspokenness is a source of surprise to those holding naive notions of the supposed iron discipline and putative regimentation of Catholicism, it simply shows that they are not so familiar as they might be with the frank expression of such orthodox writers as Dante and Chaucer, Erasmus and Thomas More, who

put forth their critical comments on churchmen when the Church was supreme.

Tom Walsh never made any secret of his profound admiration and reverence for the Catholic faith, but he did not go to the extreme of Charles Lamb who loved his friends "not in spite of their faults, but faults and all," and he was too worldly wise to be astonished at the irregularities of the professedly religious. Realizing that a Church which began with one traitor and one denier among its original twelve would have its proportionate lapses in later ages, he knew that human nature is human nature, and this was the stuff in which as a literary artist he was primarily interested.

Such traits as these have a deeper significance than perhaps appears on the surface, the real point being this, that Tom Walsh was so thoroughly persuaded of the truth of his religion—or rather, he was so intimately and comfortably at home in the Household of Faith, that he could afford to jest about it. He knew himself to be a member of an ancient and world-wide family, and his jokes were those charming and delightful affairs—family jokes.

Although Tom Walsh was a sophisticated "man of the world," and so was thoroughly alive to social distinctions and conventions, in a certain sense he was the most unworldly of men. Not only was the acquisitive or possessive instinct not in him, so far as money or material possessions were concerned, but he was not drawn even by those intangible influences which will sometimes snare

those of an idealistic or artistic bent. Literary "log-rolling," that prevalent vice of writing cliques, and in general all the mean shifts and paltry expedients of writing people were completely out of his orbit.

Almost as a corollary of this quality was his extreme generosity, and it was practically a warrant of possession for one to express admiration for anything of his—whether some foreign curio or a rare first edition. And he was one of the very few established poets I have known who would risk his own standing with publishers to urge upon them the work of obscure or uninfluential writers.

No account of Tom Walsh would be complete without a reference to his really extraordinary intuitive powers, rising at times to the pitch of positive clairvoyance or "second sight." This, probably one of his Celtic inheritances, often showed itself in a quick reading of character, merely on first meeting; occasionally it took the more uncanny form of an accurate forecast of future events. Such a reading of the future was shadowed forth regarding his death in the last two letters I received from him, and while it is true that he had had various heart attacks, still these in the last month of his life were no more severe or numerous than those he had suffered during the preceding six or seven years, and throughout that time there had never been the least reference to death either in his letters or conversation.

Under date of October 3, 1928, he wrote: "My health is not any worse than usual, but don't hold back any honors, parties or emoluments for I cannot hope to be hereabouts very much longer." And, even more signifi-

cant, on October 24, just five days before his death, he wrote: "Perhaps I should avoid political thinking for a while and take to pastoral poetry or to the mystical authors in preparation for the Poetry Society of Eternity."

The jocular tone of these extracts was entirely characteristic. For at least the last five or six years of his life Tom Walsh walked in the constant shadow of death, and he had sufficient medical advice and sufficient medical knowledge of his own to realize this. Yet in the face of this neither his social activities nor his wonted quality of spirits showed the least abatement. A friend of his comments on "the brave way in which, knowing that the end might come and would probably come suddenly at any time, he faced it and went on with his work."

In certain respects Tom Walsh afforded a curious parallelism with the great Dr. Johnson—in his physical proportions, his trenchant and ready wit, his kindness especially to juniors, his fondness for conviviality and companionship, his liking for late hours and a corresponding dislike of getting up in the morning, his wide scholarship, "fit to grapple with whole libraries," his democracy, his liking for and excellence in talk. But the differences were just as marked, and his fastidiousness in dress, his fine manners, his cosmopolitan outlook, his æsthetic sense in the various arts, his lack of dogmatism and intolerance raised definite distinctions between himself and the great Cham of 18th-century literature. In fact, it might be truer to say that his quality of magnificence brought him closer to those gorgeous Italian hu-

manists of the 14th and 15th centuries and he could well have taken the part of "a gentleman of the Renaissance."

Nevertheless, the parallel with Johnson will persist, and in nothing was this more exact than in his friendships. Like Johnson he had the wisdom to "keep his friendships in a constant state of repair" by association with younger men. The way he looked me up that winter night was entirely characteristic, and he literally had "troops of friends," most of them young and many of them strangers and foreigners to the country—Spaniards, Lithuanians, South Americans, Swedes, Norwegians, a large number of whom he was helping to get established in America. These constituted the crown of his social activities, at once his pride, his pleasure, and his never-failing solace. In the most exact meaning of the word he had a positive "genius for friendship." It remains to show that he had a genius also for something else; but even if he had never written a line, it is difficult not to foresee for the consummate charm, noble courtesy and warm generosity that made up Tom Walsh the sort of immortality that becomes a legend—a legend of high friendship that those who knew him would not willingly let die.

II

Thomas Walsh published during his lifetime four books of verse: *The Prison Ships and Other Poems* (1909); *The Pilgrim Kings: Greco, Goya and Other Poems of Spain* (1915); *Gardens Overseas and Other Poems* (1918); and *Don Folquet and Other Poems*

(1920). It is from these and from additional pieces, either in manuscript or published in various magazines since his last book, that the following selection has been made. All told, the present volume embodies about one-half of his entire poetic product. What was the nature of that product, and how does its maker rank as a poet?

Of course, we are all familiar with the pious exaggerations of mortuary testimonials. Moreover, the difficulty of appraising contemporary worth—here doubled by the fact of personal friendship—is always great. Nevertheless the judgment must be ventured here that with the death of Thomas Walsh there passed one of the finest poetic talents of our generation, a talent no less admirable because it was of a kind rare and perhaps unique in modern American letters. And in order to give a proper understanding of Thomas Walsh's characteristic quality a word or two must be said on a matter which to some may seem an artistic irrelevance.

The situation may be summarized by the statement that the poetry of Thomas Walsh was poles removed from the spirit of the modern world. Not that he was polemically antagonistic to that spirit—he was too good an artist for that—but simply that his philosophy and outlook were different. Is the modern world realistic, sceptical, inclined to material comforts and alleviations? Then Thomas Walsh was romantic, idealistic, and indulgent to dreams of sanctity and asceticism. Has the present age become "scientific," factual, absorbed in vague notions of progress, resolutely opposed to religious discipline and definitely incredulous of divine sanctions?

Then Thomas Walsh based his philosophy on the spiritual inheritance of Christian centuries, permeated his work with historic tradition and held to a firm belief in a supreme governance above and beyond the physical forces of the universe. It was not merely that he re-created the Ages of Faith—he quite literally lived in them.

Is it entirely outside æsthetic considerations thus to insist on an artist's philosophy of life, the informing spirit that moulds his work and gives it vitalizing breath? Certainly, the attitude of mind, or rather the habit of soul just described, offers a striking contrast to that of the majority of contemporary poets, and it is a strong sign of the world's power today that it has succeeded in bending to the expression of its pursuits and purposes so many of those usually recalcitrant spirits, now uttering their sad little songs of frustration and bitterness, doubt and disillusionment. Seldom before indeed have poets as a class been so docile to the ideas and dictates of their age, and there is a certain irony in the fact that in literature too the law of compensation holds, so that those poets who express most fully the message of their time, fail by that much to have a message for succeeding times. If, as some of us think, judging by the great poets of the past, poetry is primarily a matter of spiritual experience, it would seem not altogether impertinent to inquire whether the present distrust of the moral will and disbelief in eternal categories afford a sound basis for enduring art.

Whatever may be the standard or the fate of other poets of the day, Thomas Walsh at any rate had the great

good fortune of evading the enfeebling curse of contemporaneity. Nor is the reason difficult to find. Thomas Hardy thirty years ago put his finger on the troubling element of much of our present art and philosophy when he remarked of one of the characters in *Tess* that "he was wonderfully free from the chronic melancholy which is taking hold of the civilized races with the decline of a belief in a beneficent power." Precisely because he had "a belief in a beneficent power" Thomas Walsh escaped the predicament of those who have a finely developed art of expression but find nothing worthy to express, and he was thoroughly aware of the justness of Emerson's statement that "In all design art lies in making your object prominent, but there is a prior art in choosing objects that are prominent."

In form Thomas Walsh's poetry disclosed an unusual variety: brief, fragile lyrics; poems in dramatic form; sonnets, odes and miscellaneous pieces; and narrative poems—a fourfold arrangement somewhat arbitrarily adopted in the present book. Through almost this entire body of verse two characteristics appear—melodiousness and grace, and the glowing color derived from the poet's prolonged devotion to Spain, her life, art, history and literature. In short, he not only shows himself a master of "the singing line," but also imbues his work with a southern warmth and richness of imagination and thought that verges on the pictorial.

On these qualities of Thomas Walsh's poetry Mr. Lloyd Morris has given the following sympathetic account: "In some respects his art is like that of the painters

about whom he has written; in any event I know of no poet whose verse so successfully conveys the play of hot sunlight upon brilliant color, the exotic rhythms of Spain, the brooding melancholy of its clinging past, the curious blending of medievalism and Moorish influence from which even modern Spanish life has never wholly succeeded in detaching itself. In his verse one finds the singular conjunction of profound and sometimes even austere religious feeling and a keen perception of sensuous beauty in its every form. This and his instinctive appreciation of the spiritual values of cultures and traditions not his own, I have always believed to be the most salient characteristic of his art."

Nevertheless, there are reservations to be made. Oddly enough, Thomas Walsh won his widest acclaim in a mode wherein, for all his manifold poetic virtues, he was least proficient, namely, lyric poetry. Here he displayed all the adroit tricks of his craft—music, grace, delicacy, charm, disclosing, as one critic puts it, "a muse of nuance and melody, of lilt and laughter." On the mere score of technical expertness, for instance, it would be instructive to study, say, "The Sigh for Deirdre," a piece of only twenty-four lines, wherein he has dexterously woven no less than twelve end rhymes, twenty-two internal rhymes and at least six assonances.

Somehow or other, however, in his lyric verse he failed to give voice to two essential elements of great lyric poetry: passion and imagination, qualities which in other forms he showed that he indubitably possessed. The fact

was that in the lyric form his main strength proved his weakness, and he comparatively failed here precisely because of the vigor of one quality that gave him success in the narrative and dramatic forms, namely, his objectivity. Penetrating, psychological and emotional he could be, and full of a stirring imagination when he dealt with his beloved painters or medieval monks, courtiers or knaves, or showed them dealing with one another, but when he spoke, or rather sang, in his proper person, he was as a rule merely fanciful and did not find utterance for his deeper emotions.

The very titles of his lyrics in many cases reveal their true nature: "Guitar Song," "Acquarelle," "To a Dancer of Tanagra," "The Bells of Roncevaux," "Zither Song" and the like. Light, graceful, airy, they are arranged, as has been said, "much as the Japanese dispose cut flowers in a vase; they show the same selected and ordered abandon, the same abundance in a pruned material," or as another has put it, "These lyrics come with a musical surprise, a certain troubadour cadence, a suggestion of the strumming of a guitar." Indeed this phase of his talent was strongly influenced by his extensive knowledge of music, in which moreover he was somewhat proficient as a pianist. Certainly it is no inconsiderable achievement that Thomas Walsh could rival the light touch, graceful fancy and unfailing melody of such poets as Calverley, Locker-Lampson, Lang and Dobson. He had, however, his characteristic difference, and in many of these lyrics, as in "Sunset Balconies," there are serious

overtones and subtle implications of more weighty matters that quite definitely lift them out of the category of *vers de société*.

Emphasis, perhaps unduly pointed, has been laid here on Thomas Walsh's lyrical deficiencies, though attention has also been directed to the fact that the lyric of fancy also has its place of honor and will give its proper pleasure when rightly approached. If the point has been unduly labored, it is simply because Walsh more than most poets suffered from the tendency, critical as well as popular, to "place" a poet by one or two stray lyrics.

In the more reflective or contemplative forms of lyric poetry, however (grouped in § III of this volume under the head of "Sonnets, Odes and Miscellaneous Pieces") Thomas Walsh showed a deeper and more imaginative side—more force, greater vision, as in that strange phantasmagoria "The Blind," which Alice Meynell called "that remarkable poem," and in the odes, where Richard Le Gallienne found "a truly Latin dignity of expression." In this body of verse too Walsh gave evidence of a keen sense of contemporary values and the local scene, as in his witty and satirical series of "Mother Goose Sonnets." Nevertheless, the truth remains that his strength is not here but elsewhere, and it is in his work in the field of dramatic dialogue and narrative poetry that his real rank as a poet should be appraised.

When we come to a critical examination of Thomas Walsh's non-lyrical poetry, many qualities are immediately apparent: humor, character drawing and spirited movement; skilled portraiture and shrewd psychology;

vivid color and sensuous élan; scholarship, seriousness of purpose and dignity of expression; firm, substantial basis and clear outline; culture and dramatic action; inner fervor and yet undisturbed objectivity. But it may all be summed up in this, that he had the genuine poet's supreme possession—the creative faculty: when he brought characters on the scene, he made them come alive; and having a story to tell, he told the story.

In this portion of his work there are frequent disclosures of curious and out-of-the-way bits of erudition in diverse fields—in history, old manuscripts, canon law, theology and medicine, in which last he had much more than a layman's knowledge. Particularly in evidence is his minute and extraordinary knowledge of medieval religious ceremonial, as in his famous description of the scholastic procession in "Frei Egidio," as authentic and almost as colorful at the event itself must have been.

Still more remarkable—a rare thing indeed in a poet—was his strong interest in the art of painting, to which he brought not merely factual knowledge but a positive natural instinct and an unusual æsthetic appreciation. This is strikingly revealed in his dramatic dialogues on the Spanish masters, whether it be in his various references to details in Greco's masterpiece, "The Burial of Count Orgaz," or in his interesting and original interpretation (in "The Maids of Honor") of Velasquez's "Las Meninas," a painting the meaning of which had never heretofore been adequately explained.

It is no part of our purpose here to give a minute account of the wide ranging dramatic and narrative poems

which represent Thomas Walsh's true excellence, though we can hardly forbear registering our preference for "Don Folquet" or from noting the skill with which the movement of its blank verse—now languorous and dreamy, now full of a sharp intensity and fierce energy—is adapted to the varying fortunes of its hero. All this and other pleasures the candid and ingenuous reader must discover for himself. But before finally opening the door to this garden of rare delights, suffused in the glow of a remote past, let us present an extended quotation from a critical monograph by Mr. George N. Shuster, on the whole the most penetrating and comprehensive critique yet written of a poet who, as the critic himself says, "has not been served with thick incense by the populace":

"His work is not facile but fantastic—it is the richly embroidered, subtle, fundamentally intricate poetry that has always been the real artistic speech of Irishmen. There is passion and delicacy, moral reflection, and even deep brooding over the irony of human life—all the fruitful materials of verse—but everything is cast into the curiously interwoven patterns of Celtic melancholy and understanding. Nevertheless the word æsthete was never more inappropriate than here. The constant flutter of culture, the flash of modernistic technique across the page, do not obscure the solid horizons of a great, sure tradition. Mr. Walsh's strains of reverence are honest; his psychology is robust; and his frequent grotesques are genuine. A poet who can shout, caper, spin the thread of an immeasurably fine idea, stand awestruck in the

presence of sanctity—such a one is too virile for the eighteen-nineties or any period when hats are more highly esteemed than heads. . . .

"What can profitably be said of a poet who has infinitely much to say for himself? Here once more the safe rule of criticism is the ancient mandate, *Tolle, lege.* When one tries to sum up an impression of this work as a whole, its expression of the varying moods of a modern lifetime, its blend of contemplation with zest for the deeds of the hour, its scholarly wit and its divining admiration of what is beautiful and great in the Christian past, one is struck first of all by the utter absence of morbidity and affectation. This is poetry which has somehow been cleansed and dyed in the flood of a greater art than it itself can be—the wonder, the ecstasy, the pathos of romantic days. To be truly romantic seems in itself a pledge of wisdom. A man need expend only a little effort to befuddle himself with medieval twilight and Gothic gargoyles, but it requires a stout heart and a hale mind to draw near to the supreme vision which once hung over Europe like a mothering hand. Few have the patience or the enthusiasm to seek it out. Yet there are moments, for all of us, when the blood of our ancestry stirs us, like the constant booming of a bell, to a tryst with Arthur and the scholars of Cluny. We Americans especially can hardly understand ourselves—can scarcely get our bearings in the tremendous drift of accelerating moments—unless in one way or another we draw close to the springs whence the hopes of our race leaped up during that long yesterday when we

learned the meaning of Greece, of Rome, of Calvary. We are poets only when our hearts are warm, and there is little on the current of life to feed the immortal fire. And so, in the midst of the frenzied debate for gold, might, technical skill, comfort, an occasional shout of spiritual discovery is a priceless proof of vitality, even though it pass almost unheard by the throng."

In these poems, then—the work of a conscious artist, consciously doing his best—the reader will find something of the serenity, sanity, in a word, objectivity, of the old poets. Most emphatically they have what Rossetti said was an essential element of all genuine poetry—intellectual backbone. To those tired of morbid self-analysis, exploitation of personality, and the whole bag of trivial tricks labelled "self-expression," there will be something indescribably refreshing in the art of a man whose vision embraced more than himself and the present hour; and if the faith which led him to a sympathetic understanding of past ages happened to be his misfortune in his contemporary evaluation as an artist, he himself certainly considered it his glorious privilege as a man. Perhaps, too, in view of the dogmatic assertiveness of present-day critics, there may be some pertinence in the sardonic remark of Mr. Ernest Newman that the difference between good composers and bad ones is that it takes the good composers a long while to be discovered and the bad composers a long while to be found out.

JOHN BUNKER.

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I

THE LYRIC MUSE

SUNSET BALCONIES

For me no winter twilight falls
  But brings a dream of gold,
Since well I know their dear white walls
  Are gleaming as of old;
I know that down arcaded square
And narrow street they still are there,—
  Dolores, Pilar, Mercedes,—
  Reclining in the balconies.

Mercedes, who belies the name
  Of her sweet patroness renowned
As Queen of Mercies, shrined in flame,
  At Barcelona crowned;
And Pilar, little face of rose,
Whose Virgin on the pillar glows
  At Saragossa; there they rest,
  Their dark eyes golden with the west.

Though seven swords of silver press,—
  There in Granada's shrine,—
Her velvet-mantled patroness
  Of Mother-Grief divine,
Dolores only smiles to scan
The sunset on her spangled fan,
  Whose sparkle lights again the grace
  That memory treasures of her face.

AQUARELLE AFTER WATTEAU

Shepherdess, nay, go not yet
While the trees are dripping wet
  From the rain!
Come, sit here beneath the eaves
Of the grotto till the leaves
  Dry again.
Every lamb is in the fold
Huddled safely from the cold
  And the dews;
Stay, the sun will soon appear
With a smile to find you here—
  Don't refuse!
See, the mists have pearled your hair
And your hands are—I declare!
  Cold as stone!
Nay, 'tis but my arm that slips
'Round your waist—and these my lips
  'Gainst your own!

TO A DANCER OF TÁNAGRA

Around thee, barefoot girl, there float
  The comely draperies of Greece;
Still sways thy form as to some note
  Of childhood that can never cease.

Ho, for thy crystal skies!—the throngs
  In Proserpine's or Dion's rite
Trailing the mountain towns with songs
  And garlands,—till again the night

Finds in thy votive breast a flame
  As on the altars. Hush,—dost hear
Thy lover whispering thy name,
  Corinna,—or was't Thelaïre?

Soft through the moonlit vines the flute
  Thrills forth,—and thou art fain to dance,
Lithe girl of Tánagra. How mute
  The syrinx that could so entrance!—

Now o'er our fireplace let no blast
Nor memory touch thee with a regret;
Dance on,—frail terra-cotta cast,—
  Our hearts make music yet.

PICARESQUE: AT THE BEGGARS' BALL

Old Pablo sighed,—"I've sought your glance
  All evening long, so pray be kind
And grant me favor of the dance."
  "Señor!" she blushed, "but you are blind."

"Yet stay," she murmured, "since you plead,
  We'll tread this gay fandango; come—"
"Ah, Señorita, thanks indeed,
  But you forget you're deaf and dumb."

FROM AVIGNON TO TARASCON

From Avignon to Tarascon
  Psalms have died away in laughter;
Spire, and turret, and *donjon*
Echo but some *rigodon* .
  Careless of the Great Hereafter.
Never more reflects the river
  Tonsured head or pluméd one,—
  Pope and monk and prince are gone,
Troubadour and hearty-liver
  From Avignon to Tarascon.
Yet today the Rhône goes singing
  Quite as though no Papal John
  With his huntsman's clarion
Ever set its woodlands ringing;
  Quite as though no rogue in iron
Jousted here, nor amazon
  In severity or fun
  Proved half-deaconess, half siren,
From Avignon to Tarascon.
  Sun and vineyard still betray man—
Château-Neuf's red juices run—
Brigand still is Cupidon
  To many a lass and godless layman
From Avignon to Tarascon.
  Ah—what rosy sacrileges,
Broken vows, we've left upon
Lips like Jeanne's or Marthe-Yvonne!—
  Floating past the blossom hedges
From Avignon to Tarascon!

CATULLUS ANENT HIS LESBIA

There's Lesbia, vowing she would rather
Be mine, than that Almighty Father
  Jove besought her!—
Swearing it,—yet, sublime deceiver,
She hardly hopes we shall believe her;
  Since girls who plight such pledges write
    On air and water.

IN A FRIEND'S GUIDE-BOOK

A flower of Spain—yellow rose of Seville
That graced of old some gypsey's lustrous hair—
The spoil, I fancy, which the lucky devil
Bore off in memory of his folly there.

A flower of Spain some gracious señorita
Has thrown at carnival amid the ball—
Or bashful token of some Mariquita
With fan, mantilla, and embroidered shawl.

A flower of Spain—ah, not his last memento
Of Moorish gardens seen by honeymoon—
Left in his guide-book indiscreetly lent to
Another tourist in the month of June?—

A flower of Spain—yes, Time prepares to blot it
To rust and ashes, all its fragrance flown!—
'Tis evident the rascal has forgot it—
But I shall add some others of my own.

ARMENIAN ROAD SONGS

I

O lovely pedler-girl that strays
At noontide through our hamlet ways,
I cannot rest for love,—desire
Hath plunged me in such bath of fire!
This prayer alone to God I speak:—
  Forever to detain thee near,—
My cheek against thy downy cheek,
  Till thou forget the path from here!

II

To me thou art earth's royal ring
  Whereon the brightest gem is set;
Thou art the moss beside the spring
  With sparkling dews of morning wet;
Thou art the apple on the bough,
  And I the little leaf on high
That trembles lest the gardener now
  Shall pluck thee, leaving me to die.

THE SILENT PILGRIM

"Thus saith Ibn-Alahmar: Let the very stones carry thy petitions."

"Hear me, O pilgrim on the Mecca road—
I am the stone whereon a slave bestowed
His prayerful message for that blest abode;

"Thou hast the hands to guide thee on the way,
The feet to bear, the lips wherewith to pray—
Lift me a space—Great Allah will repay!

"For thus the Signet Ring hath ratified:
'He who shall helpful hands and feet provide
The pilgrim stones—in naught shall be denied.'

"So when at last I reach the silver door
And lie among the sacred heaps of yore,
I'll speak for thee though thou shouldst speak no more."

Then from his camel down the Bedouin came
And raised the stone and kissed it without shame
And murmured—Allah! blesséd be His name!

Then rose and all the night in silence went
Until the dawn unclasped her silken tent
Beyond the minarets of wonderment.

QUATRAINS

Largess

Up to his mosque, lo, Time the Sultan passed
Between the beggar Months around the gate,
And in October's lap superbly cast
His golden largess and went in elate.

The Silver Birch

I heard throughout the woods' seraglio
The Sultan Autumn's widows tell their woe;
And saw the Frost-King enter in his pride
And choose the Silver Birch alone for bride.

JUNGLE DANCE

Strumming of banjos, pattering of feet
  Among the cabins where the moon is white
Upon the river, and the dancers meet,
  And prance and caper all the torrid night.

Banjos and bones; the old remembered whine
  Of voodoo incantation; petulant strum
Like cannibal tomtoms; frantic intertwine
  As when they battered the bamboula drum.

Stealthily prancing, with white eyes ashine—
  Now stiff as sculptures on Egyptian tombs,
Now sleek and haughty, cringing and malign—
  They glide like Afric tigers in the glooms.

Or loose and fluttering as some scarecrow blown
  In idiot frolic (Hark, the cobra hiss!—)
They twist and twine some Dance of Death unknown—
  The blasphemy and mockery of bliss.

MAID MARION WEDS

(From Tristan Klingsor, to the Music of Pierné)

Messire the King, upon your palfrey nearing
Our hamlet-fold, would you the news be hearing?—
At dawn will Marion the shepherdess
Put on her little bridal dress,
And to the call of pipe and string and reed
Unto Saint-Jean-o' Woods will gay proceed
To wed the swineherd—so they tell—
Of Jean, Monseigneur de Nivelle.—
Make ready, pretty rustics, in your best,—
All who would win our shepherd gallants dressed
In ribbon and in bell!—
But you, Messire the King,—Monseigneur Jean—
I pray
Within your turrets and your terracing
Afar delay!
No tidings feign to know of it,
Spite of the flutes and blow of it,
That in the dawn our Marion
Is wedding 'neath the boughs of old Saint-Jean!—
Messire the King, upon your palfrey nearing
The hamlet-fold, ah, feign you are not hearing,
Messire the King!

RUSSIAN SPRINGSONG AFTER MINAIEV

She softly droops her maiden eyes
  Behind the casement ledge at home,
And ever and anon she sighs,—
  "Ah, if the spring would only come!"

Another on his bed of pain
  With hope of health and sunshine near,
Warms his faint heart with like refrain,—
  "Ah, if the spring were only here!"

And soon the spring with flower and dove
  Brings each a portion on its breath:—
For her, sweet blossomings and love;
  For him, sweet blossomings and death.

You can hear them as you go
  While the mules creep higher, higher,
Where the torrents overflow
  And each summit lifts a spire;
Through the vales you hear them soaring
In a silvery chant adoring—
  Hark, the bells of Roncevaux!

Lone the proud old abbey stands
  Dreaming over lost Navarre;
Stony lie the folded hands.
  Stony gaze by lamp and star
They who lit the world of story
With the soul's first glint of glory—
  'Neath the bells of Roncevaux.

Knightly comrades, row on row
  In their mountain shrine, forgotten
By their feudal towns below,—
  There they lie—Fame's first-begotten—
Helms collapsed and hauberks rust—
Dust where all the stars are dust—
  Round the bells of Roncevaux.

Through our hearts their visions steal
  Out of ancient midnights telling
How they woke the Christmas peal,

How their Easter chimes went swelling
Through the springtime morns of old
Ere the world was deaf and cold
To the bells of Roncevaux.

TO A POET HESITATING

Out of song comes silence,—
  Out of silence, bliss;
    When thy song is over,
    Hearken, breathless lover,
  Hearken unto this:
Love is ever speechless waiting
In the soft eyes hesitating
  'Twixt a frown and kiss.
So is silence unto singing
As the nest unto the winging!
  Sweet beyond all eloquence
Is the solace that comes after
    Love's decisive song;
Spills the cup of joy in laughter,
  And is rapture more intense
    Than what music can prolong.
Wouldst thou in thy singing, poet,
  Love's reward not miss?—
Cease thy prelude, then, and know it
  Silent in a kiss.

THE BIRTH OF PIERROT

Was it a bird that sang?—was it the plash
  Of silvery water—that awakened me?—
It seemed that at the dark wood's edge, some flash
  Of moonlight set my soul from prison free;
And all the grim primeval memories
  Of cruel strife, of loveless hearts that groped
In caves and gloom, shook off some long disease
  And, springing forth, my heart took flower, and hoped.
Now down the world I run—a fugitive,
  Tapping in snows upon your window-pane,
Or laughing in the sunlit showers that give
  The April blossoms to the hills again.
I am half faun, half angel, butterfly!—
  The lover sees me flitting o'er the hill—
Ah, well he knows it is no flower—but I,
  Pierrot—the springtime with its thrill!
She at her casement leaning hears my song
  A-whisper down the trellis, rose to rose;
I am the moonbeam there that lingers long
  To light his face in dreams to her repose.
Yea,—I am all the wit and laughter faint
  Of all the world!—the gleam of life and art,—
Prince Fantasy—the sinner and the saint,—
  The child-philosopher in every heart!
Passing, I yet remain in memory
  So all I touch again grows glad and young;
My blossom-wand I wave!—again shall be
  The dance of youths and maids, and music sung!

GUITAR SONG

To the lyre my fingers throw
Songs I would the world should know.

Though my songs from lip to lip
Float like butterflies that sip
Sweetness down a vale of roses,
Think not that my heart reposes;
Nay, it is my heart's own beating
The guitar doth keep repeating.
But the singer's breast will beat
With a throb no songs repeat,
So while love the lyre is telling,
The guitar remains his dwelling.

To the lyre my fingers throw
Songs I would the world should know.

MATINS

When in your heart the song seems ended,
And life and laughter no more keep tune
With the lilt of the waters, and day seems blended
With shadows that stray from some ghostly moon,—
Faint heart, remember the month of June.

Then the southwind whispers the trees, "O brothers,
Awake and array ye for the feast!"
And the lambkins bleat, "It is dawn, dear mothers!"
And the tulips hailing the sun as priest
Lift up their chalices to the east.

Yea, and each leaf like a cymbal beating
Proclaims its pæan by hill and glen,
"Laudate Dominum" repeating.—
And you, faint heart, what sing you then
As the brooks and the birds respond "Amen"?

THE PARTING

Though it was spring and in the land
  Of roses and the sun,
Fate in a moment tore us hand from hand
  And said the dream was done;

Never to know the fullness of the year,
  The sweet alternate burthens of the days,—
To share no more in smile or tear,—
  We turned confused on unreturning ways.

You unto friends and comradeship afar,
  To take and give what tenderness they knew;
And I to know what consolations are
  With them who dream not what I was to you.

Through all the summertide,
  Across the wastes of starlight and of noon,
It was for you my being cried—
  For want of you all life fell out of tune.

My arm unstrengthened by the thought
  Of you went forth unto the gleaning;
The laughter of the vineyards only brought
  A joy unmeaning.

Ask not my paths, if there shall be a morrow
  Our eyes can meet;
I have been far in caravans of sorrow,
  Nor shall the tale repeat.

AT MEMORY'S CASEMENT

Upon the blossom branch in spring
There once would come a bird and sing;
There once would sound a mellow song
Around my heart the whole night long.

Nor ever lark at break of day
But took me on its silvery way;
Nor nightingale by star and rose
But at my heart outpoured its woes.

Till now, their voices hushed in tears,
With springtime passed adown the years,
My heart which hath their message known
At Memory's casement sings alone.

TEARS AGAINST THE MOON

Tears on my pillow—who has wept
Here while my worn eyes slept?
Tears—many tears—within what ghost-world shed—
For what persistent dead?
By day my lids have opened, dried
And wise with that old grief that died;
Tears on my pillow—ah, what lovely face
Has visited my sleeping-place!
What lovely voice has said
Ineffable canticles of the dead?
What soft reproaches spoken
For love-troths broken?
What sweet confession made
Of heart-desires delayed?
What long adieux sighed o'er and o'er?—
My mind recalls no more—
Tears on my pillow—witnesses in vain
Of half-remembered pain!
Her vision draws away unto eternal day
Leaving the noon for my content
But holding a lament
To slake the moon and stars of our commune,—
Tears on my pillow—tears against the moon.

ZITHER SONG

A little world—we truly say
  While days are young and careless-hearted;
From clime to clime we speed today,
  Earth's paths are cleared and ocean's charted;
But, ah, how large a world we stray
  When thou and I are parted!

A fleeting world—as in a dream
  'Tis gone ere we have paused and wondered!
Life's span is but a firefly gleam,
  A chance half-slept away, half blundered;
But, ah, how long the days must seem
  When our two hearts are sundered.

OUR LITTLE HOUSE

Our little house upon the hill
In winter time is strangely still;
The rooftree, bare of leaves, stands high,
A candelabrum for the sky,
And down below the lamplights glow,
And ours makes answer o'er the snow.

Our little house upon the hill
In summer time strange voices fill;
With ceaseless rustle of the leaves,
And birds that twitter in the eaves,
And all the vines entangled so
The village lights no longer show.

Our little house upon the hill
Is just the house of Jack and Jill,
And whether showing or unseen,
Hid behind its leafy screen,
There's a star that points it out
When the lamplights are in doubt.

AD ASTRA

Love, you are late,—
  Yea, while the rose leaves fall
  In showers against the moonlit garden-wall,
My firm hand bars the gate.
The nightingale
  Has worn himself with pleading;
  The fountains' silvered tears are interceding,
But what is their avail?

Love, you are late,—
  Long stood the postern wide
  With all my morning-glories twined; inside
Bird called to bird for mate.
Noon and the sun,—
  The loves of bees and flow'rs;
  With folded hands unclaimed I marked the hours
That saw my youth undone.

Then evening star
  And coming of the moon!
  Ah, not too soon, my soul, ah, not too soon
Broke their soft grace afar!
All consecrate,
  I chose my white path there,
  And took the withered roses from my hair.
Love, you are late,—too late!

WHERE DREAMS GO BY

Over the hill there's a roadway turns
  Through the fields of barley, wheat and hay;
The moonlight paves it, the noontide burns,
  The clouds trail over it all the day.

It is the road where my dreams go by
  O'er velvet thresholds to the dawns;
It tells me where the hamlets lie,
  The silver spires, the pasture lawns.

"Put by,"—it signs me, —"your cloak of care,
  And think no more on the old worlds gone;
Here are Hesperides more fair,
  Here lovelier vales than Avalon."

"ALL THE BEASTS OF THE FOREST"

"All the beasts of the forest
Do move in the night"—
So the heart of the dreamer
Goes stealthily and light
Through the horrors forgotten,
Unspoken of men—
The greed and the vengeance
Of mountain and fen.
Yea, the dull heart disgorges
The lecherous things
That day calls abortions;
Sleep drags our vain wings
Through the realms of the Gorgons,
Through blood and the mire
And blasphemous orgy
And sweat of desire.
There is star-conflagration;
The world-crunch; the cry
Of the pine that is stricken;
The seas are laid dry;—
A revel of monsters
And demigods breaks
Through a cloud-tumbled fastness
Of cañons and lakes.
They call me, they sign me
In chaos of dreams—
I reach for your handclasp—
How lifeless it seems!—

Alone where I smother
Entranced in affright;
"All the beasts of the forest
Do move in the night!"

II

THE SPANISH MASTERS

(DRAMATIC PIECES)

GRECO PAINTS HIS MASTERPIECE

SCENE: *The Cigarral de Buenavista, Toledo, 1588.*

DOMÉNICO THEOTOCÓPULI (*"El Greco"*):

At last that red orb drops away—there goes
The Angelus! Ave Maria!—Hear
The ringing of your sacristan, Señor—
That bell of yours, I tell you, is too large
For Santo Tomé's beams!
You found our songs
Of Crete too sad the other day! perchance
Ibn-Ezra has some lighter tunes. Make haste,
Lad, bring your lute into the garden-house,
And try that Moorish snatch—the laughing one
The Señor Cura of Illescas sang.—
As for myself I choose severer chants,
Stern dirges piercing as an icy blade—
Remember, Don Andrés, I am "the Greek";
'Tis this I'd have my masterpiece reveal
Where Don Gonzalo Ruiz, Orgaz's Lord
Is seen entombed, the Paleologue he is,
Amid our group of Greeks and humanists.
I love your ghostly dawns, your tumbled hills,
Toledo's walls and alleys ere the mists
Are wholly routed by the noon,—a friend
Or two for converse, some good monk returned
From India or the lands of heretics
With stories of strange tortures, beasts, and fruits,
And devilries in regions where the name

Of Jesus never woke; or, stranger still,
The wonders of the cells and cloisters here
Within the city, when some friar or nun
Is marked with Christ's own wounds of hands and feet,
Raised from the ground in prayer, or scourged all night
By angry demons.—Then on summer eves
To stroll with Tirso or Hortensio
Along the orchard steeps, among the urns
And marbles our great Cardinal bequeathed;
Discussing the last treasure-trove from Greece,
Some coin or broken torso, some palimpset
Sent by the Rabbi's hand to be confirmed
By Covarrúbias; then home again
To read my Valdivielso and to watch
Gerónima and Jorge at their play,
Here on my terrace, where my nightly cup
Of good *esquibias* awaits. I trust
The dry wine pleases Your Paternity?
Your health, Don Andrés. Now to business;
They say you've won your suit?

DON ANDRÉS NUÑEZ DE MADRID:
(*Cura of Santo Tomé*)

At last!—There came
An order by the Primate's courier
This morning; the bequest holds good; therefore
The Chancellor declares Orgaz must pay
Its Lord's demise as though 'twere newly made
And not some hundred years ago,—and pay

The arrears. We now can count our maravedís
To match with any canon in the town;
So, what with fowls, and wines, and grain, and wood
In annual tithings from those granite fists,
The Orgaz peasants, now our little church
Can be restored; besides we are prepared
To pay your ducats.

GRECO:

Then tomorrow morn;
But 'tis no sale, remember! you advance
The appointed sums, and hold the work so long
As I do not demand it and repay.

DON ANDRÉS:

Your usual terms; we do agree to all.

GRECO:

I'll have them set it on the terrace here;
This twilight takes a like effect of gray
As Santo Tomé's nave. Tobal! Gaspar!—
Bring out the canvas-frame—"The Burial
Of Don Gonzalo"— Careful, too; the top
Is wet.—You blockheads! careful there, I say!—
Nay, you Ibn-Ezra, keep your lute a-tune;
Don Andrés loves the old Galician school,
So play Manrique's song, "The Penalties
The Absent Know." There, lads; now turn it round—

DON ANDRÉS:

Santísima!—but 'tis a miracle!—
Gonzalo in his Flemish steel!—The saints,
Augustine!—Stephen!—in their cloth of gold
Come down from heaven to lay him in the tomb;
The Bishop silver-bearded like a star;
And Stephen with his amber-cherry cheeks;
Your Jorge pointing in his velvet coat!
And I with book and cope of Requiem!
Our Pedro Ruyz surpliced!—And our cross!
The *caballeros* too! Well pleased they'll be
To live forever pictured in our church!
Poor Santo Tomé cannot lack again
For patrons!—Ne'er, I vow, did mortal brush
Create such blacks and gold, such damascene—

GRECO:

The heavens? The heavens, Paternity?—Your thoughts
Of them, Maëstro-theologue that shone
In the Trilingüe of Alcalá?—
Or are you fain to avoid the theme I gave
The Inquisitor Don Niño when he came
This morning prying wherefore did I paint
My angels' wings so large?—or did I doubt
That seraphs were pure spirits? yea or nay?
Or did I lean to Scotus and opine
Their nature held some sort of matter, so,
Perchance, I feared that smaller wings might fail
To bear their beings up?—I gave him back

Some queries like his own: Were those angelicals
Held pure by the Aquinas? Spanish schools
Of old said no, with Scotus and Bernard.
'Tis "certain faith," the Lateran fathers held,—
"Angels are bodiless"—that much at least
Is dogma; then what need to give them wings
At all, *Señor Inquisidór?*—With that
He hied him off, and I heard tell it made
Great chatter at the Carmelitas where
This afternoon they brewed the chocolate
New-come from their Manila mission-house.
But none can put me in the wrong; my creed
Is paint; let them keep theirs in words.

DON ANDRÉS:

And yet, Doménico, meseems you teach
Theology—

GRECO:

And wherefore not? Are words
To be the only signs of thought?—If sounds,
Then why not, with our lights and shades, denote
Distinctions, entities of soul and mind,
As well as mere corporealities?
Thus see you the intent I here pursue:
No master of Valencia or Seville
In craftsmanship has ever matched the brush
Wherewith I paint the scene—the lower half—
As actual as when the miracle
Was wrought in Santo Tomé as they brought
The corpse for burial, whereon appeared

The saints, and solemnly composed its bed
With their own hands. But how, so scorning words,
Interpret well the scene, except I show
Wherefore Toledo's priests and notables
Bear so resigned a grief?—are gazing up
With such a trust in heaven? What though yourself,
Don Pedro, Don Diego, wise Antonio,
The knights, myself, and Jorge, and the friars,
Are here portrayed to life, were there not such
As we assembled thus some eight score years
Ago, whose faith was in the skies, who saw
With eyes of flesh that miracle performed?
Yea, I myself have caught such visionings,
And here display—with emphasis and shade,
Foreshortening this at will and lengthening that,
Troubling the line or smoothing it as seemed
By rapture warranted,—for every Greek
Is something of a rhapsodist at heart.
See how my torches point all eyes and thoughts
Toward heaven. The crucifer lifts up the Sign
Of Our Redemption till it cleaves the bound
Between us and our goal. A seraph wing
Denoting love-entire is cleaving through
The cloud that is half winding-sheet, to bear
Gonzalo's soul—new-born to perfect bliss;
That cherub intermediate, who speaks
Of reason-joined-to-love, would usher in
The Cross, whence flock the roundel cherubim
As though, like swallows darting from its eaves,
To greet the eternal day. Here uppermost

Sits Christ upon the clouds imperial;
His body real, as He rose from death;
And at His knees, Our Lady also real,
As you behold, since also she in heaven
Holds a perfected flesh. Doubtless you now
Surmise from this philosophy why here
The Baptist, though in glory, shews a mien
So crude and so elongate with the light
Half-frosted on his being incomplete,—
As well as the Apostles and the Elect,
Who must await till Resurrection bring
Their natural union with their bodies back;
But look, what solid keys old Peter swings
Across the gulf 'twixt heaven and man! How all
Take form and being only as the light
From Christ plays through them!—'Tis my firm resolve
Some day to paint them with less earthly dross
Than clogs them here, Don Andrés—

DON ANDRÉS:

Verily
Thou preachest an evangel, yet I fear
Our humble folk of Santo Tomé's church
Will find your heaven is cold—

GRECO:

That well may be;
But think you, Señor Cura, that I left
My flowery schools of Venice and of Rome
To gather warmth and color in Castile?—
Let others use such vulgar splendors—

DON ANDRÉS:

Nay,
Good friend Doménico, take no offense.—
We wait your picture and your hand to mark
Its place upon our walls. (*Aside*) The arch is dim,
And few will mind his dismal bit of heaven.
It hardly matters now. (*Aloud*) The air grows chill;
Our bells for *Animas* will shortly ring,—
I must make haste, Maëstro, into town—
Tomorrow, then?—

GRECO:

Before your Mass is done
The lads shall bring the canvas-roll, and I
Myself shall stretch it on the wall.—Be quick,
Tobal, and Santiago,—torches, swords,
And cloaks! Escort the Señor Cura home
Across the Juderia!—Until morning,
Don Andrés—

DON ANDRÉS:

God be with you.

GRECO:

Go with God.

GRECO'S LAST JUDGMENT

SCENE: *The Refectory of Santa Maria de la Sisla in the Mountains of Toledo, 1604.*

THE FATHER-PRIOR LUPO:
Nay, patience, patience, Fathers!—You will see
How Don Doménico will settle him—

FRAY JUSEPE DE PAMPLONA:
The little rogue—

FRAY POMPONIO DE REGLA:
I warned you not to trust
His angel face—

PRIOR LUPO:
Pomponio,—enough;
Where is he now?

FRAY LEANDRO DE CADIZ:
Below with Brother-Cook,
Railing against us in the scullery—
Calling us niggards, misers of the gold
The Emperor and Don Philip heaped on us—
Swearing to shame us throughout all Castile
Unless we pay the ducats.

PRIOR LUPO:
Mea culpa!
I should have made some bargain with the lad

When first he entered here. Who could foresee
His impudence? I wished a bit of art
To decorate my cell; 'twas fine enough
Before, as Fray Pomponio sees fit
To hint abroad; yet, as it is the wont
Of prelates and grandees to visit us,
And to receive them there is left to me,
My cell, it seemed, might with decorum boast
Some sacred canvas from El Greco's brush—
"A Francis on La Verna,"—just enough
To show we had not always overlooked
Toledo's greatest painter,—we the monks
They call the "wealthy Hieronymites."
But he refused, alleging his frail health
And broken age, complaining that our house
So oft misprized his work when he was young
That now we were too late; he proffered us
Luis Tristán his favorite, the best,
He said, of all his pupils. Half constrained,
I gave the youngster the commission.

FRAY CAËTANO DE UCLÉS:

Then
We had this impish village brat sent here
To laugh at us, his lip but hardly dark
With manhood—

FRAY POMPONIO:

A mere urchin here to paint
The Assisian's Vision for La Sisla's friars!—

There, Father Lupo, there you see exposed
The old Greek's venom in his little snake!

PRIOR LUPO:

Misjudge not Don Doménico. What fault
Had we to find with Tristán? Brother-Cook
Indeed was guilty when he served him bread
Hot from the bake-house at forbidden hours.
True, he was sleepy-headed serving Mass,
And scratched Pomponio's profile on the back
Of the pet turtle—a mere boyish prank—

FRAY ISÍDRO DE GUADALUPE:

Moreover he has wrought a masterpiece
Of rapture of the soul! El Greco's self
Could scarce do better!

FRAY JUSEPE:

But the price he claims!
These stories of the Emperor and King
I fear will be our ruin. There be some
That say our very cells are lined with gold!
What have we come to, when this artist tribe
Can scold for money?—when a peasant brat
Whom Don Doménico has scrubbed and combed
Sets up to bait us for two hundred ducats?

FRAY CAËTANO:

Virgin of Guadalupe!—After all
Our kindness toward the lad! With so much gold

What harm might come to him! His youth's to blame;
We did but wish to encourage him to work,
But not to indulge his greed and vanity.

PRIOR LUPO:

His master will decide; have patience, for
I know he'll come and set Tristán to right,
When once he hears the matter. It is time
Old José and the mules had fetched him here.
Go see, Leandro.

FRAY LEANDRO:

They are coming now
Around the hill. 'Tis Don Doménico!—

FRAY CAËTANO:

And not a whit too soon! For all his aches
And bandages, El Greco never fails
Where there is quarrelling on!—

PRIOR LUPO:

Then welcome him,
Brave Caëtano; you, Leandro, too,
Run down and greet the carriage. Let us show
The aged painter he has reverence here.

FRAY LEANDRO:

Señor Maëstro Don Doménico,
Be welcome to La Sisla!

FRAY CAËTANO:

Welcome here.
The Father-Prior sends me out to say
Himself is coming forth to greet you—

PRIOR LUPO:

Prince
Of all the Arts and Glory of Toledo,
Welcome, you bring honor to our house!—
Let me assist you to alight—(*Aside*) Go quick,
Leandro, have the Brother-Minister
Get out the royal plate and tapestries—

DOMÉNICO THEOTÓCOPULI ("*El Greco*"):

Greetings, good Señor Prior,—would my years
Might weigh less heavy. But your wise José
Drove slowly from the Cigarral. And you,
Fray Caëtano,—Fray Isídro,—bloom
Like roses in this healthy mountain air!
You, Father-Prior, you, Pomponio
Most reverend, look, meseems, but half your age—
And now for that young scamp of mine
That causes all this turmoil among friends—

PRIOR LUPO:

Nay, speak of him anon,—when you have gained
Some rest and light refreshment in my cell;
There you will find the painting he has made.
Go, Fray Jusepe, you, and summon him.
Leandro, take the Master's other arm—

There,—now arrange the cushions at his back—
So—lay his staff and crutch beside his chair—

GRECO:

Were I but younger, Father-Prior, I
Would come and paint the vista round your hill,—
Toledo heaped upon her rocks, the foaming gorge,
The gray volcanic cliffs—alack-a-day!—
But now Tristán—is that his painting frame?—

PRIOR LUPO:

Nay, not before you sip our Santo grown
In our Escorial vineyards. Serve the cakes
Of cinnamon, Isídro—

GRECO:

Precious wine!
Stay, let me see the tray—'tis kingly too;
None else save Benvenuto models thus!—
Alas, good Fathers, all too ill am I
For other food than prayers. The picture now—
Where is my lad?

LUIS TRISTÁN:

Here Don Doménico.

GRECO:

Be not afraid; stand up and answer me.
What was my bidding when I sent you first
To do the painting for the Father-Prior?

TRISTÁN

To rule my conduct as you would your own;
To paint as though I were yourself when young.

GRECO:

And this you did?—

PRIOR LUPO:

His work is excellent.

GRECO:

But yet the Fathers have complained you take
Advantage of their goodness.

TRISTÁN

When I asked
Two hundred ducats they would pat my head
And tell me I am young, and promise me
Some other work. When I demand the price
Then Fray Pomponio calls me arrant rogue,
And Father-Prior sighs—but will not pay—

GRECO:

They have done well, perhaps, to put a curb
Upon your vanity. But these complaints
About your grave infractions of the rules—
Burning your taper every night in bed
To read the "Lazarillo"!—pilfering
The hot fresh bread from out the oven doors!—

TRISTÁN

Such rules are made but for their novices.
At first, I know, I had my fill of cakes,
But now I get but angry words and looks
And kind old Brother-Cook does penances.

PRIOR LUPO:

'Tis quite the truth, good Don Doménico;
We have indulged the lad too much, I fear,
Finding him whimsical and bright-of-eye;
But when he took into his head to ask
Two hundred ducats for his task—and he
A mere apprentice without works or fame—
Why then we did refuse. 'Twas his demand
To send for you to be the arbiter;
But knowing your infirmities, we feared
To give you trouble.

GRECO:

Trouble—do you say?—
First let me see his picture.—So,—ha! ha!
You scamp, you ask two hundred ducats, eh?—
My stick!—My crutch!—Nay, let me at him there!

TRISTÁN

Mercy, have mercy!

GRECO:

Let him not escape—
Hold him, Pomponio!—Bring him here to me.
Now let me see the work again.—My Luis!

You painted this—this rapture of the heavens—
Francis with Christ's own wounds of hands and feet,
The wingéd Crucifixion in his eyes!—
You painted this—and yet, you little knave,
You would disgrace our craft and steal the bread
From honest mouths!—

PRIOR LUPO:

Nay, Master, strike him not!
The boy is young—we wish him well—

FRAY POMPONIO:

Next time he may know better—

FRAY LEANDRO:

You forget
He would submit the judgment to your word.

PRIOR LUPO:

Come, the poor lad's in tears!

FRAY CAËTANO:

Which show at least
There is some good in him.

GRECO:

He has brought shame
Upon my school and me!—To rob the poor!—

FRAY POMPONIO:

He's but a novice—

GRECO:

Novice, do you say?
In faith he is! to spoil the artist's price
And ask a mere two hundred ducats, when
His work is worth five hundred!—Come, you scamp,
Five hundred ducats is your price, you hear,
And not a maravedí less, or back
To town Saint Francis goes with us at once!—
Roll up the canvas—

PRIOR LUPO:

Don Doménico!—

FRAY POMPONIO:

He'll make us laughing-stocks!—I told you so.
There's not a convent in Toledo where
I'll show my face this many a day to come!

FRAY ISÍDRO:

Lose not a moment, Father-Prior; pay
The ducats down at once.

GRECO:

The Brother knows
A bargain; I commend your sense, Isídro.
Be sure, not all La Sisla's eminence
Will match through future ages with the fame
My little Luis Tristán's prentice work
Will bring your house.

PRIOR LUPO:

We'll close this business;
Let Brother-Bursar fetch the gold.

TRISTÁN

Your hand,
Maëstro, blesses when it strikes! I kneel
To kiss it—

GRECO:

Nay, my Luisito, come
To my embrace!—my blessing and my pride!

THE MAIDS OF HONOR

SCENE: *The Studio of Velazquez in the Royal Alcázar of Madrid, 1656.*

DOÑA MARCELA DE ULLOA:
(*Knocking and calling from the outside*)
Señor Marshal,—prithee turn the key!
Her Highness the Infanta is at hand!

VELAZQUEZ:
(*Perplexed, putting down his brushes*)
Where is my Juan Pareja?—What an hour
To be disturbed. (*Opens the rear door; in a burst of sunshine enter the Infanta Margarita, Doña Agostina de Sarmiento, Doña Isabel de Valasco, Doña Marcela de Ulloa in nun's habit, a Guardadamas or Lady's page, the Dwarfs Mari Barbola and Nicolasico Pertusato, and the hound Nodo. Tinkles are attached to the ladies' high heels.*)

INFANTA:
Don Diego, I would see
How you make pictures. (*Velazquez receives her on one knee. She starts to take the leather armchair in front of his canvas.*)

VELAZQUEZ:
(*Rises to prevent her*)
Nay, Your Highness errs;

None but His Majesty can seat him there;
'Tis so commanded.

INFANTA:
I'll keep standing then.

DOÑA AGOSTINA:
(*First Maid of Honor*)
'Tis better so, Your Highness, for the hour
Of your *siesta* is begun. We should repose.

INFANTA:
No, I will stay and watch the Señor paint.

DOÑA ISABEL:
(*Second Maid of Honor*)
What love of art!—(*affectedly*) Like her great ancestors,
The Philips and the Charles, you see she grants
Full honor to your craft, good Don Diego.

VELAZQUEZ:
'Twas in this very room of old the great
Antonio Moro painted, and likewise
Sanchez-Coello for Don Philip Second.
Here daily too our own most-artist King
Reviews my tasks, instilling me with thought
As vast in art, as in affairs of state.
He is my world; his the philosophy
I strive with here. I have no business
Nor converse for the crowd.

(*Aside to the Maids of Honor*)
This very hour
Their Majesties are coming. You must coax
The Infanta to depart. You know the rules
Of Our Alcázar,—as King's Marshal, I
At least must keep them—

DOÑA AGOSTINA:
The court etiquette
Is also our concern; but all day long
The Infanta has been restless!—dragging us
About the grounds and palace, rummaging
Each room and hidden passageway. You know
We dare no force—

DOÑA ISABEL:
The dwarfs are out of hand;
Nicolasico is a very fiend,
Defeating every subterfuge of ours
To tempt the Infanta home. They have indulged
In romps around the throne-room; climbed the towers,
And visited the ponies in the mews;
At every moment there's a new caprice!

DOÑA MARCELA:
The Queen will have the child obeyed;
Good Señor-Marshal, you must pardon us.

VELAZQUEZ:
I would consider you, for should the King
Be out of mood, his spleen will turn on us,

Not on the Infanta. Haste to get her forth;
He came upon the minute yesterday,
And should the Queen have kept him waiting now
'Tis we shall answer for it! I am bid
To tend them here alone.—You see, my work
Is almost done.—

DOÑA MARCELA:
(*Turning with the others to view his painting*)
A marvel! And most like
Of any you have made!

DOÑA ISABEL:
The first to show
Their Majesties together!

INFANTA:
(*Leaving the dwarfs and hound*)
O Señor,
What pretty face you give the Queen! and look,
Nicolasico,—there's my father too!

NICOLASICO:
(*Drawing himself up proudly*)
A mighty King say I! when I am old
I shall be just like him!—

GUARDADAMAS:
Be silent, dwarf;
The King is close at hand. And do not tease

The hound when he is drowsy, you forget,
He sometimes knocks you down.

DOÑA MARCELA:
(*To Mari Barbola*)
Come, Mari, haste.
You've seen the picture quite enough, I think!
At home there's cinnamon and chocolate.

MARI BARBOLA:
(*After a long stare*)
Think you, sweet Doña Agostina, now;
Why should not I arrange my hair like that
(*Pointing at Queen's portrait*)
And be as pretty as the rest of you?

DOÑA AGOSTINA:
(*To Doña Isabel*)
Let not the palace coiffeur hear her talk,
Or we shall be eclipsed!

VELAZQUEZ:
Your chocolate
I know is waiting, then you'll play among
The flower-beds where there are butterflies
Swarming today all gold and red and black!

INFANTA:
This morning we ran after them,—but failed
(*Pointing to her guardainfantes, or hoops*)
To catch them!

VELAZQUEZ:

You should try the grotto then;
This sultry day the fishpools will be cool.

DOÑA AGOSTINA:

And there are pearly shells to play with, brought
From out the Indies shores—

INFANTA:

We played with them
All yesterday until Nicolasico
And Mari took to throwing and I cried—

DOÑA AGOSTINA:

Your Highness now will take your leave?

GUARDADAMAS:

Beware,
Nicolasico, or the hound will snap!

VELAZQUEZ:

Doña Marcela, as you hope for heaven,
Get them away! The King must be obeyed!

MARI BARBOLA:

I am so thirsty—

DOÑA ISABEL:

Quick then, come and drink.
(*Takes the water jar from Velazquez's side-table*)
With your permission, good Señor—

VELAZQUEZ:

Her health,
And wealth and a handsome husband!

INFANTA:

No, let me—
(*Attempting to snatch the jar from Mari, who indignantly turns from swallowing the water to push the Infanta*)

DOÑA AGOSTINA
DOÑA ISABEL } Stop!—

DOÑA MARCELA:

Stop, I say! Touch not Her Royal Highness!
Give me the jar—

INFANTA:

But I am thirsty too!

DOÑA AGOSTINA:

Within the Queen's Apartment, you will find
The fragrant water set for you to drink;
Your Highness, shall we go?

DOÑA MARCELA:

(*To Velazquez*)
We hardly dare
To risk a drop or morsel out of course,
Lest she be taken ill.

DOÑA AGOSTINA:

Your Highness, come!

INFANTA:

Marie can drink whilst I go thirsty! No,
I will not stir until I have my share.

VELAZQUEZ:

(*Aside*)

Santiago!—it is well the King comes late!

INFANTA:

Speak, Señor-Marshal, say that I may drink.

VELAZQUEZ:

Your Highness knows the Queen has given command
That none should serve you food and drink except
At her appointment.

(*Doña Marcela is observed to whisper to the Guardadamas who hurriedly disappears from the room.*)

INFANTA:

Then I'll go without,
And stay to see the pictures. Did you paint
Them all yourself, Don Diego?—lovely ladies
Bathing in the woods, and shepherds too,
And dogs and goats and flowers above the rest—

VELAZQUEZ:

Your Highness, would that I could do so well!
Great Rubens, whom your grandsire Don Carlos
Commissioned, painted their originals.

INFANTA:

Your new ones hardly are so pretty, yet
They look more like the pictures I myself
Can see when peeping through my fingers so—

VELAZQUEZ:

A test that I approve, "The truth, and not
A picturing"—that is my motto here.
(*Aside to Doña Marcela*)
Your messenger delays,—the King will come!

DOÑA MARCELA:

Where is the man?—Stay, here he is at last!

GUARDADAMAS:

Quick,—the King is on the secret stairs!
(*Guardadamas drops on one knee, presenting the golden salver and red clay flagon to Doña Marcela*)
The water for Her Highness.

DON JOSÉ NIETO:

The Queen's Marshal (*entering the door and saluting Valazquez and the ladies*)
I announce
The Royal Majesties of Spain!

VELAZQUEZ:

(*Aside*)
Alas!
Then we are lost!

DOÑA MARCELA:

(Bowing on one knee to Doña Isabel, and presenting the salver and cup)

The water for Her Highness.

DOÑA ISABEL:

Quick!

(She bows on one knee to Doña Agostina)

The water for Her Highness.

DON JOSÉ NIETO:

Hush!—

The King and Queen,—

(The mirror at the back centre shows the reflection of Philip IV and Queen Mariana, who otherwise do not appear on the scene)

DOÑA AGOSTINA:

(On one knee offering the cup and salver to the Infanta, as in the painting)

The water for Her Highness.

VELAZQUEZ:

(Stepping backward as though the monarchs were in front of the stage, until he strikes his position before the easel, as in his painting, "Las Meninas," then, as if suddenly inspired)

Your Royal Majesties, behold, I pose
My masterpiece alive before your eyes!—

MURILLO PAINTS "THE ASSUMPTION"

SCENE: *Seville, in the year 1665, the house of Don Bartolomé Murillo on the Plaza de Alfaro; in the sunshiny, white patio, with bright flowers in pots, birds in wicker cages, and a tall palm-tree visible over the rooftop.*

Murillo, about forty-eight years old, is standing at work before his easel. His model, Rudina, about eighteen years old, is posed on a raised platform, her robe of light blue and her hands crossed on her breast. At a rear corner of the patio sits Doña Juanela, an old woman in black dress and plain veil, her hands busy with her large red rosary beads. Strumming of a guitar is heard from the street outside and then singing in the African Gipsy manner, the voice of ANTÓN:

You must never leave the songbird
Nor the woman quite alone;
The bird, because the cat is wary;
The woman, for the lover's tone.

MURILLO:

You hear, Juanela, what the singer chants?
What are your ceaseless prayers compared with his?
This endless singing of our streets and squares
Will drive me mad!—

JUANELA:

It is the world
And spring, Don Bartolomé. They will chirp

Until the nests are ready—or the grave!
We old souls have sung, and now must hear
The others' songs—with patience of the skies.

MURILLO:

I would I knew some quarter of our land
Where I might 'scape the sound! They call it Love!—
Love!—that whole day long, and every day
It sounds but more monotonous. 'Twould seem
The only voice our Seville knows by heart.
They say, within the North, that cap and bells
Become us Andalusians best! Indeed
In other lands it is the saddest hearts
That do the singing; we are sad, it seems,
Who make our trivial songs our constant joys;
Grief hides our crown of thorns 'neath cap and bells!—

JUANELA:

Birds in their cages sing in spite of bars;
Then, too, Rufina is both young and fair,
Don Bartolomé—

MURILLO:

Did you say Rufina—
This singing is for her?—

JUANELA:

'Tis Antón's voice.

MURILLO:

This twiddle-twaddle that has plunked all spring
Outside my gate!—Then surely you have failed,
Juanela, that it would occur!—

JUANELA:

In faith,
Maëstro, you have set me to a task
Too great; we fight against the spring and youth!

MURILLO:

Have I not told you that Rufina must
Make visits to the nuns of Santa-Cruz;
Must take communion daily, and to prayer
Give all her leisure?

JUANELA:

Even so, Señor,
Love will have speech as it has eyes in spring.
And there are lovers here who look in heaven
To find embrace and kisses—even our saints,
And monks and nuns enamored of the skies!—

MURILLO:

Hush, hush, Juanela! Mock not at the loves
Our mystics know! But surely you must see
It is important to my plan for her
That she accord in life of perfectness
With our Immaculate Mother's. Ten times now

My brush has striven to show our Virgin Queen
Of Heaven among the clouds on high transformed,
Sinless and perfect in her earthly grace!—
No thought of earthly love must ever come
Across my model's mind to mar the dream
My soul would build upon her! Through my griefs
And prayers my art has come into this sun
Of joy celestial. At the Brotherhood
Of our Don Miguel have I learnt the glooms
Of penance and the tragedies of Faith;
My shadows are the bone-black from the pots
Our Andalusians burn. Besides I read
My *Pictor Christianus* and the *Varia*
Commensuración and Valverde's guide.
You see, I do not scorn Pacheco's law;—
"Our Lady must be painted in the flower
Of twelve or thirteen years; with sweet, grave eyes,
And nose and mouth of perfect form; and hair
A flow of finest gold."—Then, too, he says:—
"Clothe her in blue and white, the cycle moon
Beneath her like a reaping hook." Sometimes,
Indeed, have I neglected to include
The crown of stars and the Franciscan cord
That Sister Beatrix de Silva saw
In her great vision,—for, methinks the sons
Of the Assisian lay too grasping hands
Upon the gates of heaven. Here then you have
The Dogma and the poem of our true
Redemption,—beautifully seen and told!
There's none, they say, has rivalled me in this.

JUANELA:

Don Bartolomé's work, they say, is both
Divine in art and in the ways of Faith.

MURILLO:

You know, Juanela, how I've striven here
For perfect lightness of the floating form,—
For lift of draperies,—for angelic hues—
Have I not turned these cherub forms around
A thousand times to catch an airy rise
And ecstasy? Long have I striven, and yet
Until today the vision has been far
Beyond my brush's reach!—Then—then,
This music from the street,—this talk of love
For my Rufina!—

JUANELA:

Señor, you must see
The girl is growing up; she cannot stand
Forever on this pedestal of yours!

MURILLO:

Let her have patience! I will pay her dower
To join the nuns of Santa-Cruz.

JUANELA:

Don Bartolomé, no; I find she dreams
In spite of all your plans of other love.

MURILLO:

So, it has come,—reality declares
My work must finish and today. And so
My last "Assumption" now is fully done!
Here do I leave my gospel word, so Time
Shall not forget the dreams our century
Has woven in Faith! Mine, too, will be a note
Of joy, such as old Urban Seventh spoke
Admonishing, "Faith to sing, and Hope to dance,
And Charity to leap with Joy!" Quick, there,
Rufina, take the pose!—I'll finish now!—
Smile, dream of heaven, of purity, of light!—
Now, dear Fray Luis, let me sing with you—

O turn thine eyes, O Tender
O Loving!—ere dost leave
This vale whose flowery splendor
Masks but a waste where grieve
The outcast sons of Eve!

And when thy gentle vision
Hath marked their dismal plight,
Thou,—on thy way elysian—
Mayst trail them in thy flight,
Heaven's Lode-Star, to the Light!

(Murillo falls on his knees and is lost in an ecstasy before his painting)

JUANELA:
(*To Rufina*)
Take off the blue cloak! Hurry, little one,
Antón will be impatient at the gate.
Quick, let's be off!—Hark, there he sings again!—

ANTÓN:
(*Singing outside the house*)

Thou art like the driven snow,
And I, the dread volcano's blast;
Shall thy whiteness melting flow,
Or my fire be quenched at last?

GOYA IN THE CUPOLA

SCENE: *The scaffolding in San Antonio de la Florída at the gates of the Royal Casa de Campo, near Madrid, June, 1799.*

FRAY FELIX SALZEDO:
(*Prior of Aula-Dei at Saragossa*)

'Tis as the *copla* sings,—"Mid flowers and shade
Thy Hermitage is set, O patron Saint
Of the Florída, to whose shade and flowers
Thou owest the sweet name, Antonio blest!"

FRANCISCO GOYA Y LUCIENTES:

As keen in memory as in wind and limb,
My Father-Prior; why you climbed as though
The scaffolding into our cupola
Were just the slopes of Fuendetodos, where
You caught me scratching pictures on the barn—

FRAY FELIX:

And fine Court gossip make they of it now—
That you had drawn an angel there, forsooth!—
Francisco, come—confess,—you might as well—
Your earliest portrait was the pig!

GOYA:

Hush!—hush!—
Pray Felix, for the love of heaven! This dome
Throws down an echo,—wait,—we'll be alone.

(*Calling*) Julio! Julio!—drop your brushes, lad,—
Lock fast the outer door, and when there comes
A carriage to the Fountain, bring me word.—
Now, Padre, we'll talk freely, if I can
But see your lips, for spite all flatteries,
My ears are deaf as stones. Your prayers, amigo,
That God may spare my sight, else, I, alas,
Shall be shut off from everything on earth.
I could not hear you as we drove—

FRAY FELIX:

I praised
Your creamy-coated mules; we ne'er have seen
The like in Aragon—

GOYA:

Their legs are good;
Mine, since that jennet threw me, limp a bit.

FRAY FELIX:

It also seemed at San Vincente's gate
The Guards but half repressed their mirth, that you
Should air your ghostly friar; more gallant freight
No doubt they look for in your carriage seat.
Which minds me, now, Francisco, should it hap
These scornful gibers block your way to Court,
Send them to me at Saragossa, where
Your mother Doña Gracia's family shields
Were green with moss an age ere this Madrid
Was thought of as a cure for Carlos' gout.

GOYA:

My paintings there in Aula-Dei—

FRAY FELIX:

Peace,—
Our friars have almost grown resigned to them!
After that fracas in Del Pilar's shrine
Who would have thought that I should ever find
My Goya in the cupola again!
At least, no friar or canon scolds you here—
A boudoir, so it seems—half chapel, half
A lodge-house by the royal park, where maids
Come laughing down the Manzanares' banks
To pray Antonio for a marriage ring—
Where only the old sacristan bestirs
On Sunday morns to shake the cobwebs off,
And drive the bees, so some Intendant's wife
Can hear convenient Mass,—where prayer and rite
Are hushed and hurried if some courtier snore—

GOYA:

True, but our good old proverb says—"Of King
And Inquisition mum's the word!"—Padre,
When have you known your Goya play the Saint?
And least of all with you!—What harm to paint
My lovely Duchess—if she deign to come
To have me set the rouge upon her cheeks?
Am I not artist in my studio
As any maid or valet in her house?
You scold me for a paramour or two;

Your scamp Francisco—to believe the town—
Has hundreds both at Court and in the slums!
I thrash some bully at the fair—presto,
They say I kill my man a fortnight now;
I use our broad-staff style of Aragon;
Behold me wizard of the fence! You know
How with the neighbors' boys I'd bait the bulls
Near Aula-Dei,—now I take a seat
Beside Romero or the Costillares,
And every stroller on the Alcalá
Proclaims I am their rival with the dames
At Court, as in the arena with the bulls!—
Such idle chatter suits this idle town!

FRAY FELIX:

Lad,—lad, but somebody must pay
For knavish tricks, such as that painted bruise
They say you wrought to keep the faithless wife
At home when her poor spouse must fare abroad;
"Majas Undraped!"—and "Draped!"—they have a leer
As though to tell the town your great one's name!
And now what have we here? In church again
You paint the only angels you have known—
"Flesh of camellia white and eyes of fire"—
Disquieting spirits, strangers in our Spain,
Carrying their pulsing bodies into heaven
In worldly bubble o'er this frivolous shrine!

GOYA:

Nay, Padre mine,—but my Antonio,
Do I succeed with him, the Paduan mild

That wears your own Franciscan robe of brown?
A moment, Padre, let me touch his face
Till it resemble yours the more!—

FRAY FELIX:

Nay, then,
If I must be the saint,—let you in turn
Be pictured in yon dancer on the rope.

GOYA:

Agreed.—Now is my miracle performed?—

FRAY FELIX:

Let's say the saint is pleasing—neither bold
Nor doubting, yet a bit amazed to hear
The dead man speaking. Do I see aright
Your father's face and Doña Gracia's
In those on either side with lifted arms,—
Antonio's parents who have been accused
Of murder while the corpse, by chance unearthed
Within their garden, at the saint's command
Gives answer to relieve them of the charge?
Legend or history, who shall say? You know
How popular fancy has a way to make
Heroes and scapegoats; if the carnal heart
Fashioned its knights and damozels, we too
Have had such chivalry of saint and monk
As decks our chronicles with fables still.
The scene is rendered well,—as for your crowds,
They trouble my old soul—

GOYA:

Was it not so
From art's beginnings, Padre? Think you not
When Raphael took his peasant girls to make
His high Madonnas there was none to carp?—
When the proud Veronese showed the lords
Of Venice banqueting with Christ, that none
Took scandal?—

FRAY FELIX:

Truly so it may have been;
Yet in the earlier manner of the arts
The offense seems smaller; beauty claimed a lift
Beyond the actual day; but here, Francisco—

GOYA:

Here, Padre, you would say, my rabble throngs
With life too common round a miracle!
Should Spaniards make a pother at the thought
Of supernatural deeds?—A corpse is brought
To light—our race has ne'er been squeamish there.
The urchins clamber on the railings,—nay,
There's no offence; I've seen them do the like
Even at Del Pilar's shrine—the merry imps—
Mind not the idle gossips, Padre,—look
Yourself and see!—Where are the scandalous groups
They've made such chatter of? In all this dome
What see you but such faces as we know?—
Some touched with holy light,—some with surprise,—
Or, as the gossip goes, the Queen herself,

Some deadened to all wonder,—some engrossed,
On private themes that give no time to pause.
Amid our modern crowds where mark we now
Such splendor as the old Italians saw?
'Twas mostly fiction; mine are honest crowds;
I show their fascination grim; for pomp
And grandeur look elsewhere!—A saint, you cry,
Performing at a fair, as though to draw
The crowd away from a funambulist!
Yet each o'ermasters nature's laws:—the saint
By grace divine,—the dancer on his rope
With skill that flouts our feet—a marvel, yet
No contradiction nor denial of law.
You know how loath I ever am to speak
Of technicals; my rules are deeds performed.
Give me a lump of charcoal, that's enough.
I know but sun and shadow,—as for lines,
Where do we find them save in studios?
My eye sees only masses; things designed
And rendered for themselves to be undone
And merged to proper state to form the mass.
A brush or rag will do. Then, if you wish,
A test by day and lamplight, O nothing more
So if my lynx-eyed critics claim to spy
Manolas I have known among the crowds,—
Martincho, or some picador's dark frown,—
Or, as the gossip goes, the Queen herself,
The Doñas of San Carlos, Santa Cruz,
Montijo, and the radiant Alba, here
Smiling as angels, let them know the truth,—

My memory acts not quite unlike my sight;
It sums the charms and individual ways
Of each, till consciousness, obscured, becomes
But comprehension of them all.

FRAY FELIX

There sounds
The mighty Goya! Heaven has marked you out
For miracles.—Alas! your wasted years!—

GOYA:

Who knows,—my hearing gone, but sight half-spared,—
God still may claim me for His holy cause?
Padre, I bring but tainted Hands; perchance
They yet can serve—

FRAY FELIX:

As hers that loving brought
The ointment to the stranger's house! Who knows
When we and many generations lie
In dust what men with newer minds shall come,
And hearing my dear Goya's name, be swept
With thrill ecstatic, venerating this
Which now confounds me— Hush, your Julio calls—

JULIO:

(*Shouting and gesturing from below*)
The carriage, *Excelencia!*—awaits
Beside this Fountain of the Fan!

GOYA:

Padre,
A whisper,—'tis the Queen herself commands,
Though deaf and lame I still am dangerous!
How seems my coat?

FRAY FELIX:

That of a perfect Don
Who breaks a heart, or head—

GOYA:

Or fights them off.—
Show Julio how to rein the restless mules;
Josefa waits at home for chocolate
Among the children; I shall come in time
To drive you to your cloister door myself.—
Nay, you're the elder, Padre,—take my arm—
I know the steps.—And now,—my cloak and sword.

III

SONNETS, ODES AND MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

THE LEVANTINE

From off her back she swings the satchels down
And spreads her wares. Her hands tattooed proclaim
In arabesque her tribe and creed and name,—
The swarthy pedler through our inland town.
With sharp eyes watching for a smile or frown,
Across the worlds of time and space she came,
Relaxing never from her ancient aim,—
Here where the blue-eyed urchins pluck her gown.

What of her youth and gladness?—on what shore
Levantine,—on what height of Lebanon,
Rove the lithe kinsmen of her Biblic race?
Those eyes, perchance, Stamboul hath doted on,
Or Smyrna's alleys praised—ere, to our door
She trudged the farmlands with her beads and lace.

TO ANDERS ZORN

(1860–1920)

Beyond Siljan there is no silver sail;
The gulls wing low in old Dalarna's blue;
The isléd rocks are more empurpled through
A night that falls with a majestic wail.
The mountain pines and scarlet valleys fail
Of some wild magic that they lately knew,—
O mighty Anders!—they are lorn of you,
Who walked the ancient gods' remembered trail!—

Let build your tomb a lonely rock amid
The white sea-women's breasts that heaving play
Their pearl and gold of morn where you lie hid!—
High Sweden's royal mantle let them bid,
In folds of ermine wrapping you, to say,—
"Last of the Vikings, endless is your sway!"

THE FOUNDLING

Born of the flesh alone, no parentage
  Of mated souls had he! the orphan child
  Of joy, he took the husks of life defiled
And nursed his spirit on his wrong and rage.
Touch not his past; it perished on the page
  Where first a waif and foundling he was styled;
  As for his future, its lone path is piled
With such inheritance as none would gauge.

Out of your carven galleries look down,
But let him pass, ye children of the crown,—
  Nor bring your pity, purchased spouses, here!
But oh, ye wedded hearts, ye mothers true,
Out on the road is one that doubts of you,—
  Let not his burden pass without your tear!

TO A SONNET ON THE SONNET

Nay, wouldst thou write a sonnet on the sonnet,
Full of confectionery charms like those
The dimpled poets pin upon the rose,
Twining thy fancies as if for a bonnet,
And forcing the poor frowning muse to don it?—
Spare her, by heaven, thy nodding plumes and bows!
Thou sayst the sonnet like a lily grows,—
Then, critic, scorn not,—nor put rouge upon it!

No jewels asks she for that perfect throat
But courtly airs wherein she may expand,
And sun the cheek that gods have dreamt upon;
But gird thee, if wouldst serve her cause remote,
As one who in some alien, thankless land
Tears down the huts that hide a Parthenon.

TO AN ENGLISH SETTER

Corinthian of dogs, how word the grace
That guides your movements? How portray your face,—
The meditation of your eyes, your poise
Of royal head? Such were great Landseer's joys
Who in your woodland splendor lithe and frank
Found your race Greek from chest to slender flank
And gave you poetry for heritage.
Would that in his—your high breed's classic age—
He could have seen and caught the charm again
Of sunlight rippling through your silken mane
Of white and gold! Would he could see you now
Cleaving the goldenrod like Dian's plough
And quick with autumn's half barbaric mood
Scattering the sumac leaves in showers of blood!
Or as, in carved Olympiad runner's pose,
With ears peaked high you watch the cloud of crows
Flock with sarcastic echoes o'er the plain,
Knowing pursuit and challenge are in vain.

MOTHER GOOSE SONNETS

To Mother Goose

Ah, rare old nurse of poets, now so scorned
By hasty bards and followers of *isms*
Who leave thy breast for metrical abysms
And grewsome moods and passions unadorned,—
Would that these twanging lyrists might be warned
Back to thy lessons from their naughty schisms,
And set to con the rhythmic catechisms
Wherein thou hid'st the wisdom earth has mourned!

Would—first of women in the ranks of song!—
Mother of mystic and of symbolist!—
Thou couldst return to these, and bring along
Thy pap and gruel now so sorely missed,—
Thy saving humor (should it still exist!),
Thy breath of youthlands, and thine elfin throng!

Humpty Dumpty

Clown-monarch of the nursery, thy name
Too long is silent on the sonnet's tongue,
The while our bards sophisticate have sung
Thy cousin Pierrot and his deeds to fame!
Is't air of carnival thou lackst?—a dame,
Like Columbine, to interest the young
With that "love-interest" that is set among
The chief requirements of the author's game?

Kings prove, they say, their greatness in their fall,
So thou, mad bumpkin from the moon, hast shown

Thy merriment to childish eyes alone
That hail thy tumble as a royal flight,—
Little barbarians, with no thought at all
To sympathize, or keep a face polite!

Little Miss Moffet

Her opera chaperon was heard to say—
"Miss Moffet's nerves, you know, were quite unstrung
Because a spider—when she was quite young—
Sat down to join her at her curds and whey.
The specialists declared to our dismay
Her life itself upon the balance hung;
Since even the shock, they said, of being stung
Could hardly worse upon her system play."

And as the music died away, there came
Into the box a monster with a name
Renowned of old—but now for debts known wider—
Miss Moffet's little face looked pleased and vain,
We saw that they had cured her nervous strain,
As Prince Tarantula sat down beside her.

The Sprats

Oh, happiest of mortals, in an age
Of legal separation and divorce!—
How many hear your story in remorse!—
Would Jack were patron-saint of husbands sage;
That thou, madame, could wifely thoughts engage,
Till maids and bachelors should have recourse
As pilgrims to your platter, as a source

Of grace that would their marriage qualms assuage!
Thus Time would canonize your names benign,
Bards name you in the Daphnis-Chloe line,
  And realists proclaim you glorious!
Stoic and cynic, too, would stand aside
In awe before the maxim you provide,—
  "*Non disputandum est de gustibus.*"

The Philosophers

"To bed," says Sleepy-Head the sybarite;
  "Let's stay awhile," says fatalistic Slow;
  "Put on the pot, we'll sup before we go,"
Says Greedy-Sot, Falstaffian polite.
And on the bed the first enjoys the night;
  The second tarries in the chimney-glow,
  The glutton fills the pot to overflow,
And eats until his jaws refuse to bite.

But see, between the crannies of the door,
The sunrise glinting on the tavern floor,
  Ere from the hills, the cocks have ceased to crow!
Hark! Hark!—the knocker beats a loud tattoo,—
"Who's there without?" "Death!"—"Death, and who are you?"
  "Unbar the door and each of you shall know!"

Black Sheep

Bah, bah, old critics, have you any wool
  To spare a little poet down the lane?
  They say he's crying—poets will complain!—

Because he hears that you have three bags full
One for your master—old book-selling bull!—
  One for your dame. (For rhyme's sake, call her vain!)
  They say that all the other can contain
You need into the Public's eyes to pull.

Why should you bother with the puling boy?—
  One little bah can drown his pipings quite!
Nay, but your master, if you should annoy,
  Can sheer a black fleece off as well as white.
So when you would your smallest bah employ,
  Make sure he finds it modulated right.

To Banbury Cross

"A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!"
  And off, where Banbury's young woman springs
  With tinkling hosiery and finger rings
Upon her snow-white hobby round the course!
Fling Shakespeare down, and as for problems Norse,
  To grandma leave the Ibsen-Björnson things!—
  A pair of ankles is as good as wings
Dramatic or poetic *tours de force*.

There shall be music, too, where'er she goes,
  Not such as Wagner's endless scores beget,
But warbling of the strings and piccolos
  In rhythms that gladden ballet and soubrette—
  Till worries, duties, arts, and such, are set
As naught beside the magic beat of toes.

Bo-Peep

Vergil, Theocritus and Tasso, each
  Had glimpse of you; *chanson* and *pastorelle*
  In rarer times essayed your charm to tell;
Watteau and Fragonard took brush to teach
Their age what light Voiture empearled in speech;
  Till in the Trianon's embowered cell,
  Enraptured of your grace, a Queen would dwell
From royal state afar, and sorrow's reach.

Now our old world is weary of its arts,
  And wig and furbelow are put away,
Mankind delights but in the simpler parts
  And winsome touches of a newer day;
  And so, Bo-Peep, from Saxe and Sèvres, we stray
To nursery paths where first you won our hearts.

Madam O'Shoe

To none of our best sections *à la mode*
  Her family gave umbrage by its size;
  In fact, wise genealogists surmise
'Twas some old shoe that served them for abode.
Of course this happened ere the Building Code
  And the wondering world saw "Mothers' Clubs" arise,
  For specialists of microscopic eyes
Pooh-pooh the form of treatment she bestowed.

How artless, truly, how unsterilized!—
  The way she fed and sent them whipt to bed!
  (The very thought gives pedagogic shocks!)

And yet her boys for brain and brawn were prized,
  Her girls such beauties they were quickly wed,
  And now are numbered with our best stocks.

One Contrary

Mary, Mary, why these cockle shells,
  And pretty maidens standing in a row?
  For once your Mona Lisa smile forego
And soberly explain these silver bells.
We've borne your purple cabbage, asphodels,
  Madonnas, nudes, and Breton peasants, so
  For pity's sake, be simple, let us know
If dear Kate Greenaway in your memory dwells?

Pray why, amid your raptures on Chavannes,
  Rodin and Beardsley, Manet and Burne–Jones,
  Should she be quite unmentioned in your tones?
You pause?—and sadly our poor faces scan?
  Then in your Botticelli robes sweep by,
  Fixing a "Holy Grail" in either eye.

Boy Blue

Your little horn was heard by Tennyson,
  And Romney sketched you as you lay asleep;
  While in a fashion dating from Bo-Beep,
Your flocks untended through the pastures run.
How soon, O nursery Endymion,
  Across your haymow did the shadows creep!
  How soon the hours like wayward cows and sheep,
Stole from your side until your youth was done!

Did then some godlike rapture wing you high
To far emprise? Or did some maiden's kiss
Lead you on duty's pathways unto bliss?
Or from that hour did childhood's bloom decay
From out your heart—the vision, from your eye—
Save in some mother's memory—pass away?

On the Tree-Top

Rockaby, Baby,—mother must be gone,
For club elections will begin at eight;
Tonight the incubator stove can wait,
I've hardly time to get my bonnet on.
When the wind blows our sky-scrape flat upon
'Twill rock your cradle, and should I be late,
Ring up the elevator, dear, and state
What time you'll have your breakfast-food to John.

Rockaby, Baby, when we meet again,
Who knows, but I shall be the Right Supreme—
Grand-President of Mothers—I can't lose!—
Ah, darling, won't we both be happy then?—
With editors to serve you with your cream,
And watch your cradle, while I write my "views"!

Mother Hubbard

Good Hubbard, who can tell thy poodle's plight
Save Humperdinck in mimic roundelay?
Who paint thy cupboard but Teniers?—Portray
Thy homely features but Franz Hals by right?

As for the bone—delicious oversight
Of scribe and painter!—shall the annals say
'Twas stolen by the thieves or elves away,
Or by the canine pharisee at night?

Yet food is here for thinking. We who wait
Impatient for some cupboard to unclose,
Mayhap already have licked clean the plate
Of like and idly dream upon the bone,
Until Dame Fortune, like old Hubbard, throws
Her coffers wide, to show our treasure flown!

AN AUTUMN SONG

The days of June and budding youth are over,—
  This is the season of our middle-age;
We've had our share of roses and of clover,
  And Autumn's embonpoint is all our wage;
Still let the glass be filled, for old October
  Shall hear our praises down his echoes wing;
Youth is intoxicate and we are sober—
  Any old bird can sing in spring.

Our nests are empty and the waists so slender
  We've hugged as lads are now substantial grown;
Our visionings to grayish fact surrender;
  Life has assumed a smooth monotonous tone.
But Art is long—the idle little poet
  Outlasts the coin that at his head they fling;
Time's short—our fellow minstrel boys now show it—
  Any old bird can sing in spring.

Of Phyllis and her tombstone quite sufficient
  Our youth-time sang; of dreadful sins and crime
Out babbling lips have raised a note omniscient
  And Death has gibed us with a calmer time;
Surely the subtler moods have bowed and left us
  To snoring slumber and cool visioning;
Yet of the song think not they have bereft us—
  Any old bird can sing in spring.

So fare ye well, ye imagings pubescent,
  Ye "virile" idols and symbolic ills!

Our youngsters hereabouts are not quiescent
But pipe your chants and add a thousand trills.
For us the organ note of fate sonorous,—
The mild beatitudes that age shall bring;
Let's draw the night-time blanket snugly o'er us—
Any old bird can sing in spring.

TO FRAY JUNÍPERO

(The Bi-centenary of Padre Serra, San Francisco, California, 1713–1913)

You that in Palma paced the cloister paving
  And taught the Subtle Doctor in the schools,
Yet left your tranquil isle, the tempests braving,
  To face the tomahawks and jeers of fools,—

Junípero, ha! ha!—you wept and shouted
  And tore your bosom with a jaggéd stone,
When the poor Indians at your sermons doubted
  The clearest things philosophy had shown,—

You lashed your shoulders and to blazing torches
  Laid bare your breast—to make "the brutes" believe;
Junípero, you limped to heaven with scorches,
  But took their souls, like scalps, upon your sleeve!

I wonder would you try your syllogisms
  From Scotus, if you came unto the tribes
That fill the air with fads and frills and schisms,
  Or with your scourge and torches meet their gibes?

You may be certain many would debate you
  Among the learned sachems of today,
Though few are likely now to emulate you
  And hurt themselves to bring their tribes to pray.

THE CHANOINESSE

With vinaigrette, and purple robe, and fan,
  Madame Mathilde would take the morning air;
Adown the formal paths her old sedan
  Goes gravely moving round the bright parterre.

By gravelled walk, and grotto, with their gleam
  Of marble nymph and satyr, row on row;
By storied oak, cascade, and glen, that seem
  The shepherd haunts of Boucher and Watteau.

Her faithful Jacques and Joseph, as of yore,
  Go drowsing with her chair; they too can see
The vision of old days—alas, no more—
  That steals her from her jewelled rosary.

'Tis fair Versailles she sees,—the masques, the plays,
  Pavanes and minuets; she hears—beguiled—
The horns of St. Germain's far hunting-days
  When beauty crowned her, when Great Louis smiled.

And hark, another horn! Before her eyes
  There comes her lover scarcely more than boy;
She sees him pass in proud and martial guise;
  Her dry eyes melt,—she weeps o'er Fontenoy.

Bright days of conquest,—bitter memories
  That break her spirit!—till the old command
Lights in her eyes, as down the path she sees
  Her dear *curé* approaching hat in hand.

SPEAKETH DEATH:

"Saddle me forth the great white steed—
I ride on a mighty quest today:
A cavalier of the Spanish breed
Too long hath mocked my sway!"

(*Crash of hoofs as the drawbridge fell;*
Clank of dread through the courts and stair.)
"Stand back, thou monk,—leave Cross and spell—
And let him meet me fair!"

"Don Roderick, Master of the Sword
Of Santiago, bend the head—
You that put down so many a lord,
Yield to the lance of dread!"

SPEAKETH THE GRAND MASTER:

"Nay, Death, thou menial, com'st thou here
To play the haughty foe with me?
Throw off that visor—have no fear,
Old Roderick breaks no lance with thee.

"But speak thy message, nor delay
To bear my carcass to the clod;
Whilst thou art trudging on the way
My soul shall spur to God."

MORNING IN GRANADA

"Thou that art covered, rise, and magnify
Thy Lord, and purge thy garments of all stain,
And from thy spirit put uncleanness by—
Thou that art covered rise!"—Hark, 'tis the cry
Of morn across the mountain and the plain!

Among the hills Granada takes the glow
Of love's first blush as on some lovely breast;
Alhambra green against the pillowed snow
Hears from the minarets in town below
Muëzzins calling,—"Allah, Allah blest!"

Bells through Granada,—bells that jangle down
With pattering of mule-hoofs from the peaks
Bearing the snows ere yet the misty town
Awakes, to cool the spicéd wines, and drown
The city's thirst when noon its vengeance wreaks.

Bells through Granada—where the market train
From off the Vega through the gateway pours
With melons green and gold, and sacks of grain,
And noisy poultry on each creaking wain,
And swarthy herdsmen leading in their stores.

Throughout the Zocatin the merchants start
To drape the booths with damasks, rugs, and lace;
Ranging their sweets and scents with subtle art,
Their potteries and brasses, till the mart
Gleams in the sunlight with its festal grace.

There old Mosáden from the Syrian lands
  Outspreads his gems; black Kassim from Tangiers,
His dirks and spurs; there trading gipsy bands
From Malaga and Ronda range their stands
  And match their horses 'gainst some proud Emir's.

Now through the fevered crowd the Cadi rides
  In search of pearls to grace Jarifa's breast;
Now for some Berber chief the throng divides,
Now for some *santon,* or the Agha's brides
  Swathed in their veils upon some childish quest.

Pilgrim and priest and silk-screened litter pass,
  And horsemen galloping careless through the throngs;
Beggar and slave whose sad eyes speak, "Alas!"
Merchant and thief and cut-throat, in the mass
  That struggles round to hear the snake-girls' songs.

Till hark!—O'er all the City of the Kings,
  From Bibarrambla to Geníl's last shores,
Once more the noontide "Allah, Allah!" rings;
And as the spirit cry to heaven upwings,
  Granada—in a sudden hush—adores.

LA PRECIOSA

On the marches of Pamplona—out to sun and wind and
star—
Lift the airy spires and turrets of the kings of old Na-
varre,
Where the endless dirge is chanted o'er their alabaster
tombs
And the canons drowse in scarlet 'mid the incense and
the glooms.
Daily came the little goatherd Mariquita, lithe, brown,
Through the dusty gates to jangle with her flock across
the town,
Lounging barefoot through the alleys and the squares at
milking time,
Calling shrilly round the doorways and the cloister by
the tower.
There amid the ancient portal blazoned o'er with angels
rare
Sculptured stands La Preciosa crowned upon her dais
fair,
Whilst upon her breast The Infant turns with smiling
eyes to look
On the lesson she is reading in her graceful little book.
There the tousled country urchin used to come and shout
in play—
"Mary, Mary, neighbor Mary,—watch the Child while
I'm away."—
When—so read the Chapter annals—from the stone
would come reply

With a gentle nod of greeting,—"Mariquita dear, good-by."
Till the Canon Don Arnaldo, passing when his Mass was o'er,
Heard that banter so unseemly at La Preciosa's door,
Little knowing in his wisdom that the Virgin meek and mild
Answered through the stony image to the greeting of the child.
"When again you pray Our Lady, cease," he said, "your idle sport;
Kneel as though the queen or duchess passed you on her way to court
Clasp your hands and bend your forehead as more humble words you say,
Such as—'Heavenly Queen and Empress, House of Gold, to thee I pray.' "
Mindful of the solemn lesson, Mariquita half afraid,
Ever as the good old Canon taught her, clasped her hands, and prayed;
Bowed in rustic salutation, ended with a long Amen,—
But in stone the Virgin listened,—never smiled nor spoke again.

ON THE BRIDGE OF CÓRDOBA

Over the river that loiters down
By the sun-baked walls of mosque and town,
There sounds from the shrine and cloister spire
The passing bell of the Hours of Fire.
Naught else is heard o'er the ruined walls
Save the Canons' chant from their shadowy stalls,
As over the bridge in the dusty sun
The mules go pattering one by one.
Out on its archway, which forever
Speaks of the Moor to the Guadalquiver,
Midmost stands o'er the stream unshaken
The shrine of the Mother of All-Forsaken.
"Madre de Dios" they hail her there,
Steeling their bosoms against despair,
While out of the ages their dust trail blows
On her sword-pierced breast and face of woes.
There does she wait until Juan goes past
Broken and stained with the years at last;
There till the dust claims the rose once more
That Niña at morn in her dark hair wore.
Many an eve shall the starlight gleam
As tonight on the brow of the ancient stream,
When the clink of the goat-bells dies away
And the winds from their hidden rose-haunts stray,
And the fever of life glows more and more
In the lamps that wake on the plain and shore,
As the glooms of the patio-grilles are stirred
By the soft guitar unto wild vows heard,—

And the whispers of love inflame the breeze
Like the voice of a garden full of bees.
'Tis then shall the far white cloisters hearken
That murmur dread as the alleys darken,
Where hands uplifted shall cry for pity
On hearts that faint in the stricken city;
As the moon comes flooding the cloudless marshes,
Blanching the mosque and the roofs and arches,
While the starlit waves are as censers shaken
At the feet of the Mother of All-Forsaken.

Night on Iona,—from the north the gulls
  Come homing in upon the sacred coast
Where he who as a lad had cleaved the skulls
  Of Vikings still has lingered like a ghost.

He that was Rignald—now within the cowl
  Of Colum's monks become an ancient scribe,—
He that had stalked and plundered through the howl
  Of many a flame-swept burgh of clan and tribe.

From his white casement many's the year he heard
  The springtime call him o'er the tossing sea
Back to the oldtime glades of deer and bird,
  And wassail hearths of kings that used to be.

Whilst on the parchment of the Gospel Book
  His brush has scrolled the margin with strange flowers;
His thoughts on heaven,—yet through the pigments look
  Blue from fond eyes, and green of sea-mossed towers.

And tints of petalled cheeks, and crimson caught
  From lips long, long in dust! Each whorl of gold
Enshrines some childish tress; each rubric, wrought
  In blood, atones for that he shed of old.

Each great initial—like some vestment clasp
  The sea-marauders wrung from Orient lands,
Crusted with gems, gold-woven as an asp—
  Gleams from the parchment warm beneath his hands.

But see,—Amen half-written,—down the sky
He sights a Viking sail that hawk-like veers
About God's dovecote isle!—his battle-cry
Hushed with a pang, he folds his hands,—in tears.

THE SIGH FOR DEIRDRE

As the proud bards mused in their manes of snow
A trembling stole over the harp's gold frame,
When the north-wind blew through their ponderings
The gust on the strings that told her name.

On their couches high lay monarch, chief,
And scribe in grief and pined away
In ancient sigh, and because of her
Fell from the stir and the light of day.

And now, when the rain of the night has ceased
On the dripping eaves and the glowing worms streak
The meadows with stains as of burning tears,—
What peasant but peers for her fairy cheek?—

For them who fare o'er the lochs alone,
Or watch and moan by the holy wells,
Wan fingers prepare in the crystal deeps
What the bosom keeps and no lip tells.

Out by the stars, like a lost soul distraught,
At the thought of her eyes, I am seized with a song
Human utterance mars; all the chords of my soul
Trembling mad with the roll that far ages prolong.

By the curve of her mouth, by her shoulders soft white
I am slain with delight; yea, she haunts each lone place
From the north to the south, like the dream of a child
And the dawn and the wild roses strive for her face.

THE LARKS OF GLENDALOUGH

All night the gentle Saint had prayed,
And heedless of the thrush and dove
His radiant spirit still delayed
To hear the seraph choirs above.

So still he knelt, his arms outspread,
His head thrown backward from his breast,
A lark across the casement sped
And in his fingers built her nest.

And ere the music from his soul
Receded with the flood of day,
Through Glendalough the sunshine stole
And brushed the mists and dews away.

'Twas then the Saint beheld the bird
Serenely nesting in his hand,
And murmured, "Ah, could'st thou have heard
The matins in that seraph land!"

Then softly turned he back to pray,
Nor ever moved his arms, from close
Of eve or morn by night or day,
Until her nestlings' voices rose!

Then as his heavenly trance was done,
Above the glen he heard them cry,
"O Kevin, Kevin! Loving One!
We sing to God thy soul's reply."

Earth is a jealous mother; from her breast
She will endure no separation long
From aught she bore;
So one by one
She claimeth evermore
The parent and the friend—
The loveliest and best,
The meek, the faithful, and the strong,—
Till, link by golden link undone,
The very tomb that seems
To youth the dismal gulf of all that's fair,
Becomes the chosen hearthstone of our dreams,
The wonder-house of all most rare,
Most deathless, and most dear;
Where the bereavéd heart,
Life's exile held apart,
Would turn for love-warmth and abiding cheer.
Yea,—earth can be so kind.—
Then ye that rule the wind,
Are ye of less appeal?
Ye spirits of the stars
And regions where the suns
Themselves as atoms wheel
Beneath your thundering cars?
Cerulean ones!—
Or goddesses, or saints,
Or demiurge, or Trinities,
Wherewith heaven highest faints!

Are ye less kind than these
Dim vaults of clay,
Ye boasts and fathers of the ancient day?
Thou god Avernian, Dis!—behold
What timid form and old
Adown thy purple gulf descends
Unto the arch of Death—(Grim friend of friends!
Be thou placated!) 'Tis a mother, see,
Takes her first step—a child—into eternity!
Leave her not fearful there
Who was of love entire,
So gentle and so fair!—
Thy majesty and dread withhold
For the high head and bold,—
Imperial Death, mock not thyself with ire!
Nay, then it was not fear
That stayed her foot the while;
For now her lovely eyes,
Unclouded, brown,
Are lighted with their greeting smile—
The Hand awaited through the gloom
Is seen!—her whitened forehead lies
Upon the Shepherd's shoulder down—
Yea,—her own Jesu comes,—to lead
Unto the meadows where is Peace indeed!

THE PILGRIM KINGS

Three vagrants out along the wintry way
As night is falling fast;
"And who are ye, O strangers gaunt and gray,
With eyes to heaven upcast?"—
"Three Eastern Kings they called us; brother, pray
Didst see the Star go past?"—
"The Star!—and look ye for a star tonight
Through all these blinding snows!
Come, take ye shelter here; no more that Light
The sky of Bethlehem knows;
But see, how out against the roadway white
Some wounded footprint shows!"—
"Nay, doubter, we must on!—'Twas ancient time
Yet once we saw that Star,
And left the thrones our minions called sublime
To trace its path afar.
Wouldst see a monarch boast of rags and grime?—
Behold me—Balthasar!—
Yea, these are mortal eyes, yet they have gazed
Upon the Manger's state;
Then homeward hastening from that glory dazed
I cried, 'Throw wide the gate!'—
Alas, to hear within the wassail raised
Where on the high throne sate
My first-born with the gold and vine-leaves crowned.
'King Balthasar alive!'—
He paled,—'Some madman mocks us! Seize the hound,
And ere the dawn arrive,

Go, pelt him from the realm!' That night profound
I, still a king, survive."
"And I"—the second ancient in a voice
As drear and wintry cries—
"I, Gaspar, from a Magian throne, made choice
Of guidance of the skies;
On my return they made the hills rejoice
With flame and sacrifice.
But when I whispered of the mystic lore
The Starlight had enshrined!
Its Peace surpassing Peace, its doom of war,
Its love for all mankind—
They tore me down,—proclaimed me evermore
To banishment consigned."—
"Then he, he too was king?—yon wight that seems
Unsteady as with wine—
His eyes ablaze as one who stalks in dreams
Some dismal street malign?"—
"Nay, brother, hold,—thy hasty tongue blasphemes
A madness half-divine!
For as at dawn from Bethlehem Town we stole,
We spied him where he lay,
His crown and sceptre in the gutter hole,
With none his name to say,
Or tell the empery he bore—the goal
His aimless feet would stray.
So doth he trudge to find the Star with us
Half mocking what we seek;
They throw Life's tavern lees to stain him thus—
But see, his eyes bespeak

The Star!—The Star of promise glorious
That calls the blind and weak!
Ye vaults of heaven that sound with prayers and vows,
Keep compact with our soul!—
See, they are clearing,—yonder starry boughs
Proclaim our kingly goal—
Yea, see'st thou not already round our brows
The furtive aureole!"—

NOËL OF STE. ANNE DE CHICOUTIMI, QUEBEC

"*Friend Jeanne-Marie, 'tis the holy night,*
Thy cloak put on, thy lantern light."
(Hark to the joyous carillon!)
"Thérèse, no childless wife can say
Fit prayers tonight; go thou and pray."
(The bells ring Noël, Noël.)
"*Nay, Jeanne-Marie, at the chapel door*
Thou canst kneel till the mass is o'er,
(Hark to the solemn carillon!)
While I go up to the Crib and make
Bon-Jésu homage for thy sake."
(The bells ring Noël, Noël.)
Frosty stars from the sky look down;
Lanterns pass to the hillside town;
(Hark to the holy carillon!)
And there they see 'mid the lights and awe
The waxen Infant on the straw.
(The bells ring Noël, Noël.)
"*Rise up, rise up, good Jeanne-Marie.*
The mass is over; come with me."
(Hark to the noisy carillon!)
"Thérèse, Thérèse,—old neighbor dear,—
I must have slept,—He—He came here."
(The bells ring Noël, Noël.)
"*Hush, Jeanne-Marie, and come away;*
The church is cold,—'twilt soon be day."
(Hark to the dying carillon!)

"Yes, in my sleep, Thérèse, I saw
The Infant-Jésu leave the straw,
(The bells ring Noël, Noël.)
And come and lay His forehead blest
Here, Thérèse, on my childless breast,
(Hark to the merry carillon!)
And then I heard the children sing
The glad *Adeste* to their King."
(The bells ring Noël, Noël.)
"*Jeanne-Marie, another year*
Thyself mayst to the crib draw near."
(Hark to the echoing carillon!)
"Pray God, Thérèse, that I may there
Among the mothers make my prayer."
(The bells ring Noël, Noël.)

THE HIDING OF THE GRAAL

Night and the winter blast, and out afar
Upon the wastes a paladin grown gray
In rusted armor, seared with toil and scar,
Fared with a lagging bridle on his way.

His deep eyes fixed in space; his only guide
The worn steed's search for herbage o'er the plain;
With pallid lips and fallen breast he sighed,
"The Graal!—The Holy Graal,—I seek in vain!"

"My dreams of youth,—this faithful arm that smote
The foeman of the Cross,—my body worn
With fast and pilgrimage by shrines remote,—
My manhood withered on a quest forlorn!"—

Then from the darkness one arose beside
His stirrup, stretching forth with empty palms.
"Alas, poor Leper, without purse I ride,—
I seek The Graal, as thou art seeking alms."

"Sir Knight, we fare upon a holy quest,
But grant me water, for at last I fail—"
He loosed his gourd; against the Leper's breast
Sudden he saw it gleam,—it was The Graal.

THE BLIND

At midnight, through my dream, the signals dread
From star to star, brought word the sun was dead.
It seemed as though entire creation heard
Yet gave no answer,—neither call of bird
Nor low of cattle; but the townsfolk crept
In silence to their roof-tops. No man slept,
But merchant, bondman, prince and scribe and priest,
Their faces haggard, searched the fateful East.
Down from the hillsides to the city gates
No market wains came rumbling with their freights;
No sentry's voice along the citadel
Announced the hour; no matin peal or knell
From dome or campanile; not a sail
Stirred in the harbor offing! Then a wail
Despairing swept across the roofs, a sigh
O'er land and sea, as slowly on the sky
The sun's black bulk between the stars uprose—
One sigh of astral grief, and at its close
Came silence once again more terrible!
'Twas then, methought, a new-born infant cried;
And where the gates stood open gaunt and wide
A blind man crouched and stretched his empty palms
Into the darkness and moaned, "Alms! Alms!"

TWILIGHT BLUE

Our perfect noontide passed away,
The afternoon made sweet delay,
Till now, her glowing warmth departing,
Old twilight reveries are starting.
Deep in my heart through all the pleasure
I felt the slipping of our treasure;
Too perfect was that flower to last!
Now, night and winter and the blast!—
But stay—the gloaming still is here;
What shadows these that reappear
And sweep and smile in rendezvous
With gentle eyes the stars look through?—
They are the spirits fond and old
Whose breasts of love have ne'er grown cold,—
Who come forever faithfully
Down garden trysts of memory.

MOTHER LOVE

So glad her loving toil—so lightly borne,
'T would seem she claimed it only as reward,
Until we heard her sighing, half outworn—
"Let me not live to burthen them, O Lord!"

Such love we scarcely grew to understand
Ere death besieged her; unafraid, unswerved
By any sob, she took her Saviour's hand,
Serene at knowing, till the end she served.

SISTER GREGORIA, TO A BIRD AT SUNSET, SEVILLE, *1686*

Envying a little bird
His flight to heaven my heart is stirred,
So hardy is the wing he finds
To breast the banter of the winds,—
So lightly pulsing doth he fare
Enamored of the sunset there!—
Would I were with thee in thy flight,
Fair plaything of the breeze, tonight,
And from thy heart such impulse know
As spreads thy steadfast pinions so!
For of the Sun Supreme am I
A love-delirous butterfly!
By tender dawns I sip—but claim
The blossom of that Noontide Flame.
Unto thy heart yon crimson tryst
Of sunset glory hath sufficed;
Thy spirit glad and free of care
Doth to its golden lattice fare;
But I who, knowing, love and pine
For One that is The Sphere Divine,
Of griefs my only wings can make
And flights alone on sighings take.
Do thou, far bird, on tireless wing
Beyond the heavenly archway spring,
And breasting higher, higher, bear
This message of my fond despair:—
To say that all my heart and soul

Aglow have passed beyond control;
Annulled unto my limbs, that I
Live hanging on a single sigh.
Yet when, of visionings distraught,
My soul would seize the raptured thought
To mount away to its delight,
It finds no stirrup for the flight.

INFINITY

Amid his globes and telescopes and charts
  Grave Don Henrique heard the ocean beat
From all its myriad unrequited hearts
  Gigantic whispering at Sagres' feet.

While pale above his microscope bent down
  Fra Bartol peering at a grain of sand
Above the alleys of his sleeping town
  Seeing infinitude elude his hand.

STABAT MATER SPECIOSA

(From the thirteenth century Latin, ascribed to Jacopone da Todi)

Stood the lovely Mother smiling
By the Manger where beguiling
  Lay her little one at rest;
All her soul its gladness voicing;
As the gleam of her rejoicing
  Swept across her gentle breast.

O how joyous she, The Blessed
And Immaculate, caressed
  Him that was her only Son!
How her heart exulted for Him—
How she bent enraptured o'er Him,
  Born of her, The Holy One!

Who is there that contemplating
Christ's own Mother jubilating
  Would not share in such a joy?
Who beholding could be other
Than entranced with Christ's own Mother
  Fondling her Immortal Boy.

Through the sins of man, His creatures
She beholds the Christ-Child's features
  'Mid the breathing kine and cold;
Sees her darling born deploring;
And the place of His adoring
  But a miserable fold.

"Born is Christ within a stable!"
Hark, the joy immensurable—
Heaven's townfolk sing around!
There anear the Maid the Elder
Stood in silence and beheld her,
Wondering with her at the sound.

Would, O Mother,—Love-Fount tender!
Thou to me wouldst ardor render
So my breast might glow as thine!
Till my heart for love inflaming
Might be also made unblaming
For His gentle head divine.

Blessed Mother—thou art playing
Just as though no wounds are staying
To be fixed upon thy heart;
Of thy Son the heaven-descended
To the Manger unattended—
Of His sorrows, grant me part!

Grant me all my life's full measure
Jesukin that I may treasure
Gladly on my breast to strain!
Fervor like to thine to fill me.
Grant thine Infant's arms to thrill me
Whilst in exile I remain!

Virgin of all Virgins Fairest,—
Nay, withhold not Him thou bearest,

Let thy Babe of Paradise
By my arms be soft surrounded—
Him, whose birth hath Death confounded
At the Final Sacrifice!

Grant, as thine, to slake my yearning,
With thy Child in rapture turning
In the joyous surge of grace;
All inflamed and love-enkindled—
Every mortal impulse dwindled—
Let me share in such embrace.

Hark ye,—all Manger lovers,
Shepherds leave your watchful covers—
Join the Voices of the Night!
He in taking birth hath heard you;
Chant, and, with His Chosen, gird you
For the Fatherland of Light!

When thy Son hath ta'en and healed me,
And the Word of God doth shield me,
Grant I be confirmed in Grace!
When the body's life is ended,
Be my soul by thee attended
To the Vision of His face!

TO FRANCISCO GOYA IN THE GALLERY OF MADRID

They fawned upon you, kissed your brawny hands,
  And laid aside their masks and veils, that you
  Might paint their ivory pallor, veined with blue,
Their periwigs and jabots and their slight,
Beflowered waistcoats and bejewelled strands,—
They laid their scorn aside in their delight.

You dreamed a parchment beauty from the soul
  Of Venice, and revealed it deathless there
  In spite of deadened eyes' and lips' despair;
Then as illusion's very shadow died,
The brigand that was in you gained control
And with your peasant fist you slew their pride.

That daub of rouge upon a leering hag
  Is where you struck your queen; that reeling string
  Of rogues and cripples wrongs your Spain, whose king
You set, to mock her anguished, starving lands!—
An imbecile upon a bloated nag,—
You struck them, Goya, yet they kissed your hands.

THE TARDY SPRING

Until the spring—until the breath of May,
She meekly craved her Lord that she might stay.

"Yea, till the spring,"—He whispered her apart,—
"Until the May, thou gentle, trusting heart."

But bleak and tardy crept the days along;
There came no bloom for her, no flit of song,—

And at the last she sighed,—"The flowers delay—
Perchance they wait to meet me on my way."—

She died—at morn we threw her windows wide—
Anemones filled all the garden side.

THE PRISON SHIPS

ODE READ AT THE DEDICATION EXERCISES OF THE PRISON-SHIP MARTYRS' MONUMENT ON FORT GREENE, WASHINGTON PARK, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 14, 1908.

Not here the frenzied onslaught—here no roar
Of victory—no raucous cry of hate
From the red surge of war;
Here crowd no Cæsar's myrmidons of state
Lest for some hasty-fading laurels he be late
And night annul his place;
But solemn is the tread of feet that come
Around this hallowed mount—with drum
Concordant—with the clarion
Of youthful hearts that throb for deeds sublime—
Here where no stain can e'er deface
This columned beauty out of Parthenon,—
This glory surging pure beyond the clouds of Time.

Here on our fortress hill
Where Freedom's gathering vanguards took their stand,
O sacred relics!—how serene ye lay,
How patient for this day
Whose rites we now fulfill!
Thousands of dusks and dawns have trembled on
These portals of your tomb;
Ye heard the tread of discord shake the land,
The trumpetings of doom;—

Yea, through your sleep ye knew the orphan's cry,
The broken hearts' far clamoring,
And the pale heroes plucking deathless wreaths
From fields o'ershadowed by the buzzard's wing!
Oh, in what direful school
Learned ye the iron rigor of the mind
Your memory bequeaths?
Was it in plague and famine ye did find
Such right divine to rule—
Such hope in God and man—that double stay
Of commonwealths today?
For here, the sponsors for all ages,
Ye gave as solemn gages
Not blood alone
But very flesh and bone!
Nor pledged ye only for the strong and brave,
But for the generations yet unborn
By every strand remote that greets the morn,
For the pale despot shackled to his throne
As for the serf and slave.
O stalworth dreamers in the dust,
Thank God who took your young hearts' trust,
Your pangs, the issue of your patriot cause,
Still sways the stars and souls of men
With th' ancient seals and laws;
Nor did He turn and mock your anguish when
Ye cried His password through eternity
And died in fetters so ye might be free.
O martyrdom of hope!—to lie
In youth and strength—and die

'Mid rotting hulks that once by every sea
And star swung carelessly—
To die becalmed in war's black hell,
Where in the noon's wide blaze your hearts could soar
With gull and eagle by each cherished shore
Of home—where ye had sworn to dwell
The fathers of the free.
Doom like to this the Lydian victim bore
Who clutched at feasts divine—only to starve the more,
Well might the blue skies and the breeze
Which once perchance swept Delphi o'er,
Well might the star-eyes question:—"What are these
Heaped holocausts on Freedom's shrine?
Not even the dullard ox unto our altars led
Of old, but walked 'mid reverent throng
Anoint and garlanded!
What rite of hate or scorn of law divine
Strikes down its victims here
With not a funeral song
Nor poor libation of a tear?"
Today give answer—ye, who 'mid the battle's roar
Have known the rapture of a patriot's death,—
Ye, who have seen the aureole trembling o'er
Your brows as anguish clutched at Life's fond breath,—
Blesséd and radiant now!—look down
In consecration of the solemn deed
Which here commemorates this iron breed
Of martyrs nameless in the clay
As the true heroes of our newer day—
World-heroes—patterned not on king and demi-god

Of charioted splendor or of crown
Blood-crusted—but on toilers in the sod,
On reapers of the sea, on lovers of mankind,
Whose bruised shoulders bear
The lumbering wain of progress—all who share
The crust and sorrows of our mortal lot—
Lamps of the soul The Christ hath left behind
To light the path whereon He faltered not.

Yea, now the boom of guns,
The scarlet bugles, faint from off the world!
Lo, o'er the loftier brows of man, unfurled
The purer banners of the dawning suns!
Banners of God in godlike minds—of hope—
Of faith, to daunt the crafty hordes of greed,
The venomed remnant of the dragon's seed
Along the gutters of the world! No more men grope
Up Life's black chasms—but free they swing along
Their spacious levels in the noon's full flow'r
And strike to earth the barricades of wrong.
They have torn down the tyrants of an hour,—
Think not that they shall hear the deeps of shame
Foredoom them likewise with the despot's name;
Nor doubt this glorious vessel of our state,
This visioned bark, whereof in martyr dreams
From death's grim bulks they caught the halyard gleams,—
No feud can seize it, nor the grip of hate
Turn back its prow into the slime
For scorn to overwhelm

With name so cursed on the lips of Time
As "prison-ship" for men who could be free!

High God, Thy hand was on another helm
When every tide and breeze
Brought the hope-lighted argosies
From out the ports of hunger and of wrong!
And Thou alone hast number kept
Of that indomitable throng
Who gained this harbor portal,
From out their house of bondage crept
And sought the north, the south, the west,—
Armies of thrift and faith with hearts that blessed
These graves immortal!
Today from far their Freedom-lighted brows
Turn hither musing on their happy prows
That met the tides of sacred waters here
And touched a lustral shore whose shrines unto the skies
uprear.
And ye, O sailors faring buoyant forth,
Bear ye the tidings of this joy-swept main
Where round the coasts of Celt or Dane
Ye brave the sleet-mouthed north
Or track the moon on some Sicilian wave
Or lonely cape of Spain;
Take ye the story of these comrades true
Whose prison hulks sank here
Where now such tides of men are poured
As never surged o'er crag or fiord
To stay the gulls with fear—

Who yet such quest of glory knew
As never Argonaut of old
Seeking the shores of gold—
As never knight from wound and vigil pale
Tracing o'er sunset worlds his Holy Graal!

And lo!—to all the seas a pharos set
In sign memorial! Through the glooms of Time
'Twill teach a sacrifice of self, sublime
O'er lash of storms as through corroding calms.
Nor e'er alone shall shine
Its love-bright parapet;
But every star shall bring a golden alms;—
The seething harbor line
Glow 'neath its star-fed hives, its swing and flare
Of Bridges;—while with pilgrim lamps from sea
Shall grope the dreadnought fleets;—while endless prayer
Of dawns and sunsets floods the faces far
Uplifted, tear-stained, to this Martyr shrine,—
Whose sister torch shall greet what Liberty
Holds back to God,—earth's brightest answering star.

ANTIETAM

FOR THE 39TH REUNION OF THE SOCIETY OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC
READ ON THE BATTLEFIELD, SEPTEMBER 16TH, 1910

Once more the scythes and sickles on the hill;
Once more the harvest morns, where sinewy Peace
Swings with bright blade, and song upon the still,
Clear air grows sweeter as night's thunders cease.

Time on a summer breath has blown away
The funeral rains, the lightnings, and the cloud;
Drenched in the silver dews, each break of day
Reveals the corn-fields' waving plumes unbowed.

There is a bird in every orchard sings
With cadence softer than it knew till now;
Tend'rer the gleamings of these meadow springs;
Richer the warm upturnings of the plough.

Here children's eyes with newer beauty glow,
And lovelier falls the laughter 'round the door;
The nestlings twitter when the storm-clouds go;
Peace is the sweetest first fruit after war.

What mockery of heaven's eternal plan,
As here in gentle pasture, grove, and spire,
Ordained such morn of destiny for man,
And choked these skies with conflagration dire!

What blighting sun gave signal for that day
Across these hillsides?—bade the fields of corn
Their glint of lurking bayonets betray,
And the grim reaper Death arise in scorn?

Here chariots of gods and fiends flamed by,
And thunders quaked across the shrieking gale,
Where bodies fell and souls went up the sky
As wheat and chaff unto the iron flail!

O breast grown cold without them!—lips that wait
Their tardy trysting!—would ye more abide?
Down broke the bloody dikes of hate!
Day looked no more! Earth gulped the greedy tide!

If there be flowers blood-precious in the sod,
Pulses still nobler hallow all this air,—
Inspiritings of fatherland and God
That hush the thoughts of hatred or despair.

Pure, too, the comrade hearts, who, doubly brave
Today face memories of youth and pain;
Here victory from all defeat to save—
From old defeat new victory to gain!

These graves are bulwarks—you, the nation's sires
Along bright Fame's horizon!—Sentry-wise
Upon the mountain heights, you tend the fires
That freedom signals back into the skies!

QUIS DESIDERIO

Dark and vast are Thine outer walls,
O King of Light!
Weary the desert, lo, the parched wind crawls
Toward the pools of night.
Over Thy close there is music stealing.
Is it Thy revel, Lord, or the calls
Of my childhood's dreaming? Is it the pealing
Of angel spires, or the fever's blight?

Some rose immortal there must bloom
By fountains clear,
That waves of such ineffable perfume
Should reach me here!
Cool on my brows I feel their sprinkle,
Here in the dusk of my outer gloom
Where the stars themselves seem drops that twinkle
In truant spray o'er the sky wastes sheer.

Their hyssop melts through my soul. Perchance
She scatters there
Some old love-sign, some token,—she, whose glance
Makes consecrate and rare
Life's dawns and twilights, whose worn hands imploring
Are constant raised 'mid all Thy joys' expanse
For me remembered still in her adoring,—
She of the silvered, even-parted hair!

TO FELIPE RUIZ

(From the Spanish of Fray Luis de Leon, Salamanca, 1528–91)

O were it mine, Ruiz, to grow
  The wings of heaven, and out of bondage here,
Ascend beyond the life we know
  Unto that outmost crystal sphere
  Where Truth itself shines ever pure and clear!

There portioned to my very soul
  To witness in a light no shadow flaws
The sum and measure, part and whole
  Of all that is, of all that was.
  The prime beginnings, and the hidden cause;

To know at last what sovereign hand
  The framework of the universe made fast;
How plumb and level it was planned,
  How sure the anchor that was cast
  To lodge our ponderous globe within the vast;

The eternal pillars where of old
  Earth was established, where the hollow bounds
Of seas were set, would I behold;
  What marks the waters from the ground,
  Or hurls them surging back to their profound;

Wherefore the rock must quake,
  Wherefore the deeps in tempest rage are stirred,

And whence the North his blasts can take;
The ocean's tides, what potent word
Doth bid increase, and rise, and shrink unheard;

The lordly channels of the winds,
What power supports in upper space;
What mighty forge the lightnings binds;
Within what hidden treasure place
God stores the snows; His thunders, whence they race.

Thou knowest the portents, when the air
Is sudden troubled 'mid the summer day,
How quickly darkness gathers there,
How from the north the blast makes way.
Tossing the dust to heaven in savage play,

As 'mid the clouds' commotion dire
The darting chariot of God arrayed
Goes forth upon its wheels of fire
With lightning bolt and cannonade,
Till earth lies trembling, and mankind dismayed!

Down beats the rain upon the roof;
From off the hills the raging freshets pour;
And for their labor's poor behoof,
The hapless husbandsmen deplore
The fields they tilled and planted, flooded o'er.

On high beyond it all would I
Review the vast succession of the spheres,

The sudden conflicts of the sky,
The bland composure of the years,
The Fates, their causes, omens, hopes, and fears;

Knowing what Power upon the stars
Hath set alight their lovely, faithful flame
And why the Ursine stellulars,
The Great and Little, with the same
Reluctance dip them when the oceans claim;

Searching the eternal orb of gold
That is the fount of light and life, to wrest
The secret why the winters fold
Its beams so hurried in the west,
And Who, the night-long, cloaks it to His breast.

Then would I on the azure rim
Discern the unshaken mansions of content,
The house of treasures never dim,
The cenacles of glad ascent
Where the blesséd dwell the souls in wonderment!

ON THE PIAZZA DI SPAGNA, ROME

Sunlight and starlight find them still the same,
Still crowd the strange years by; each carven name
Grows dimmer on the marble balustrade
That winds unto the Pincian with its shade
Of cypress and of ilex, file on file,
Beyond the cross-crowned needle from the Nile.
Ne'er come the winds and rains as strangers here
Where Keat's great soul went forth; the lanterns peer
By twilights opaline as those he knew;
The low-voiced fountain sobs its midnight through.
New popes, new princes, hail with old array
The saints and triumphs granted for today;
New flowers are bartered for beneath the sun;
New dreamers come to sigh o'er days undone.
Proud Rome,—they took the garlands of your tombs
To drape their ploughshares, to inspire their looms;
They lit their furnace at your altar fires;
And scoured the seas and sped their glistening tires
Through worlds you knew not; yet unsatisfied
They come—Gaul, Teuton, Anglian, in their pride—
To wrest the fuller message from your glooms,
The word of life,—their ear against your tombs.

SAINT FRANCIS TO THE BIRDS

Birds,—birds of the air,—
Glad wings of the mountain and valley
Flashing around me with scatter of petals and rally
Through ilex and olive in carnival choir!—
Draw near, little sisters, and hearken
My voice of desire!
See where the valleys would darken;
Draw nearer, and list my prayer
To the Love that hath given
Your pinions the realms nearest heaven,
Bladed your wing
To parry with rain and with hail,
Decked you for tempests in feathery mail
And taught you to sing!
Though but the worm of His wounds I implore
You and cross you and bless you, with hand and with
mouth—
Signing North unto South,
Signing West unto East,—
Let His praise be increased!
To the North then, ye wings of the snow,—
Albatross, gull, and all nurslings of waters at war!
To the South, ye with emerald plumage aglow
For the grace of His Orient temples and bear
His comforting Love to the moon-stricken rose!
To the East, O ye larks, from your fountains
To gather His alms at morn's lattice pale!
Owls to your tombs and your belfries!—

O Nightingale,
Away to your sobbing of an empire's woes!
But, eagle wings, ye to the West unroll!—
Vanguards celestial, chanting o'er the mountains!
Fowls of the deeps, be ye contemplative there
At sundown on His mirrors vast with prayer,
Praising His Love that keeps us to His soul!
Warn ye the shepherds, swallows, at moonrise then—
Swinging like living censers out from eave and rafter,—
And circling doves— Nay, Brother Leo, hold not back
"Amen,"—
Lest all my heart go winging madly after,
Forgetful of the little worm and mole!

Silent the mountain; on the plains below
The morning broke in silent waves afar;
And in the heart of Francis, late aglow
With prayer and passion, silence like a star.
For there had passed an angel in the night
Bearing to heaven his last surrender up:
"Useless and worthless am I in His sight,
But yet His servant!" He had drained the cup
Of ultimate sacrifice, when sudden shone
An orb spread sunlike on the morning skies;
Nearer it flashed and nearer—Seraph-Son
Of God, wast Thou Thyself revealed unto his eyes?
The six great wings spread cross-wise round the form
Of Christ upon the Tree before him bent;
There was a voice celestial, sounding warm
Secrets of heaven unto his soul attent.
There was the glory and the anguish twined
On those immortal brows; while darts of fire
From hands and feet and side on his inclined,
Meeting halfway the urge of his desire.

His side—ah, torment mixed with joy!—what wound
Of love has pierced? Through either hand there goes
A hallowed, grievous nail; unto the ground
His feet are clenched as with Love's iron blows.
So were his hands God-sealed, and so his feet
Imprinted on God's way, and so his side
Laid open blooming in Love's fire-heat,—
That to the little griefs of earth he died.

IN THE HOUSE OF AUGUSTUS

Com'st thou to greet me at the Forum gate
  Where dwelt Octavian, earliest star of night,—
  Leaving thy little vales and pools of light,
Thy paths of home whereon I saw thee late?
Sweet is thine old-time message here, where fate
  O'erwhelmed man's haughtiest eminence with blight,—
  To tell this crumbling beauty of a night
Which hath survived all despots and all state.

Here 'mid this wreck of broken arch and shrine,—
Rienzi's haunt,—Farnese's hills of pine,—
  Where 'neath Time's very brow, the Goths our sires
Entombed slave-empire,—here, thy purer rays
Bespeak, O childhood's star!—Christ's promised days,
  The lamps of peace, the hearth's untainted fires.

Then you have seen the Wise-Kings pass,—
My children, answer me;
Quick, sit you down and rest, alas,
How tired your feet must be!

O mother, we did climb the hill,
Yet it was all in vain;
For though we ran, their banners still
Lay out beyond the plain;
Their steeds went galloping afar
Beneath the wintry evening star
With golden crest and rein.

Could you not see their holy eyes,
The sacred gifts they bore?
Their magic wands of wondrous size,
Their books of hidden lore?

We hurried down the orchard-side
Though darkness had begun;
Beyond the woods we saw them ride
On clouds across the sun;
And then they vanished in the west
Just where the sun sinks down to rest
And stars came, one by one.

Alas! then you did miss them so?—
I saw them pass the hill

And straightway to the chapel go,—
We there shall find them still.

And shall we see their faces there,—
Each King with robes and crown?
Quick, mother dear, the meal prepare
And let us hasten down;
For hark, the parish bells we hear
Ring down the valley sweet and clear
To welcome them to town!

THE MOTHERS OF HEAVEN

The mothers of heaven in starry thronging came
Unto the Throne Most High, complaining
That 'mid their bliss and rapturous acclaim
Their hearts found only loneliness in reigning:—
"Lord, we are but poor foolish mothers after all
Thy welcome and Thy coronal—"
Then forth The Voice o'er heaven:
"O Gabriel of Archangels, dost not know
That these are mothers?—Go,
Ransack the worlds and skies
Until to each be given
Her deathless prize!—
And Gabriel hurled
Himself from off the infinite crest
Where night swept round the world;
Until, fulfilled at last
The Will Omnipotent, unto the gate
Of Paradise the mothers passed
In pageantry most rare,
And claimed victorious there
The maimed, and weak, and reprobate,
The failure, grief, and sin,
The children of their breast,
And bore their broken toys of life as trophies in
Along the moonlit Forum of the Blest.
The empyrean hushed,—far wonderment
On radiant saint and angel fell
As the Hosannas ceased, and they beholding bent

And hearkened from the midnight's gloomy well
The world's faint laughter mocking at the Throne
Where on unshaken firmament
God mused alone.

GARDENS OVERSEAS

The gardens overseas are sweeter—
  The roof-tree learned it of the wind;
  The poppies owned to blasts unkind;
The sand stretched white as the surge that beat her.
We shall away ere the clouds grow fleeter,
  Dear brow of the large gray eyes, and find
The gardens overseas are sweeter!

But vain might Hope or Song entreat her,
  Or golden rose; she smiled, she pined!
  Oh, was my love so poor and blind
It had at last no voice to greet her,—
"The gardens overseas are sweeter!"

August, 1910.

In gardens overseas,—oh, God, what flowers
  Are strewn along the paths and fountain-place!
What blood-drenched roses, what white charnel trace
Among the lily-fields that once were ours!
What vulture-nightingale would haunt these bowers!
What noisome reek and odor foul disgrace,
  In gardens overseas, oh, God, what flowers!
Hate through the realms of Love usurps the powers.
  The groans, the women's shrieks the winds efface
In the night's hollow where the cesspools race!
Blesséd art thou, to sleep away such hours
In gardens overseas! Oh, God,—what flowers!—

August, 1917.

In gardens overseas, strange ghosts are playing
Among the children, waving spirit wands
To guide their gambols 'mid the flowerlands.
Upon the benches loving wraiths delaying
Clasp their frail arms, the secrets old half-saying;
The widows feel a kiss upon their bands;
In gardens overseas, strange ghosts are playing—
The mothers mark a radiant Stranger straying
With light upon His wounds of feet and hands:
"Forbid them not to come"—He smiles and stands;
Whilst thou, Belovéd, in thy smooth grave staying,
In gardens overseas, strange ghosts are playing—

August, 1918.

LITTLE PATHWAYS

Not by the highways and the streets, dear friend,
Where kings and merchants and their minions wend,
But by the little pathways let us go
Lone ways that only humble footsteps know.
No dawdling feet upon the world's parade
Made yonder tracks that wind across the glade
Where slyly from the flooded haunts of men
Life trickles back into the wilds again.
See, here anon and there the ways divide
Some to the brook and some to the pasture side,
Glancing sweet invitation as they turn
To draw us with them through the beds of fern.
For each though lowly in its crude design
Leads somewhere—*somewhere,* mystery benign;
And where the trail seems beaten hard and brown
Perchance the woodsmen turn from out the town;
And where yon slender course but seems to stray
Some meadow lies or else the secret way
A timid lover hastens to his sweet.
Ah, look, another half o'er-grown we meet,
But still memorial of old travellers.
'Twas death, perchance, or fault, alas, of hers.
If now the grass has crept its footprints o'er;
Perchance it led to home—a home no more.

'Tis ours, old friend, to treasure signs like these
Wherein are written rarer histories
Than chronicles of kings and empires tell;

For on the scrolling of the hill and dell
Life with a finger delicate and sure
Sets for our eyes its heart's own signature.
Soft to these hollow footways steal the leaves
When autumn turns to threaten; winter leaves
His warning breath of snowflakes earliest here;
Each in its little pulse reports the year.
Here when the golden dulcimers of spring
Strike to the forest chords' awakening,
Here are the primal leaf and grasses stirred
In answer with *Amens* of brook and bird.
Thus sweetly intimate with tender moods
Our pathways greet us from the solitudes;
Here from the past such fond reminders flow
As bid the future its vast claims forego,
Though by yon paths that by the thicket wind
The scythe of Time may other harvest find,
Though Life exult as in its proudest veins
And Empire course,—where now are mountain rains.

For Edward Loughborough Keyes,
at Mount Arlington, N. J.

NIGHT IN THE SUBURBS

Peace after fevered hours;
No more
The clatter of streets and harbor roar;
Only some wind-swept tree
Recalls the jostle and anxiety,
Only some drowsy hill, the city's surging towers.
Night, be thou mindful of thy sacred bond!
Come not as when thy reign
Shook fen and hill beyond
Man's outposts with the roaring
Of beasts in rage and pain;
But turn thine eyes, imploring
The boon of sleep
Upon these garden eaves, and keep
Thy faithful tryst and pure,
Here where calm mothers rest
Enriched with loving turmoils of the nest
Here where man's dreams endure,
And stalworth arms in sleep
Reach toward the heights of steel and granite strewn
In proud up-tumble,
Where bridges swing to heaven above the rumble
Of star-fed bees
That float amid the wonder of the moon
On merchant embassies.
Dreams glorious such as these
The sculptor knows upon his work-shop bed
Beneath the marble where he would fulfill
Some final loveliness—which still
Dawn sees unfinishéd.

The cross her withered fingers hold
Within the coffin is not gold,
But since she pressed it day and night
Against her lips 'twas burnished bright;
Until the imaged Crucified
Took her soft whisper as she died.
Now as she lies there all her years
So filled with failures and with tears
Grow half unreal; all her prayers,
The simple solace of her cares,
Yet on her lips, her mother-love
Surrendered only for a Heart Above.
Outside is spring with the song of bird
Between the vendor's outcries heard;
For town with country-side competes
Along the old-time suburb's street,
Where many a recent dweller eyes
The dusty coaches with surprise.
Then, while the quavering organ plays
Its solemn chant of ancient days,
Fresh from the parish school, the choir
Of children lisp Death's office dire;
And the sly, tousled, altar-boys
Use the big book and bell like toys.
Thus, candles flickering o'er her head,
Her hurried Requiem is said;
And *Dies Iræ* sung once more.
They take her out the narrow door;
The few old neighbors kneel around,

Then leave her in the blessed ground.—
How few that artless life bemoan
Which erred in tenderness alone!
Long was its humble course of pain
Through prayers, and tears, and prayers again
Until her seared and whitened head
Felt the Great Dawning without dread.
O Love Eternal,—stand'st Thou too apart?
Here was Thy meek, Thy trusting, stainless heart.

MOONRISE ON MANHATTAN

Out in the harbor, silence and the moon
Beyond the City's roar;
There screened from bluster of the sea
The skies and waters strewn
With stars in outlawry
Conspire against the splendor of the shore.
For sheer the golden crags and pinnacles
Lift 'gainst the wave such fretted pageantry
As ne'er Golconda's legend tells,
Nor Aztec crater poured—
In yellow answer to the sun its lord.
Here hive the golden bees
In their sky-shouldering cells;
Here 'gainst some promised dawn
From out their phosphorescent seas
The stars have laid their spawn.
How like a pigmy's dreams
Their El Dorado seems!
With what poor madness drawn
Old Nero put his torch to Rome,
Knowing not spire or dome
Liquid with gold like these
That lift restoring nipples to the skies
To nurse the Pleiades!
And thou, O moon, that bear'st thy silver urn
So far from thine old temple hills of Greece,
Upon what ancient paths of peace
Would'st think thou to arise?

By what memorial empurpled seas
And columned Parthenon
Wouldst thou—so strange—return?
The moss is over Delphi's architrave
That once thou lookedst serene upon;
Thine Ephesus is but a grave;
To naught have come thy Babylon,
Thine Athens, Latium, and Byzance,
Thy Salamis, thine Ascalon;—
Long ages down
Upon the lily spires of France
Thine eye beheld the surge of Gothic shrines
Like crowns of thorn on field and town;
Forgotten were thy Delphian pyres,
Thy sacrificial wines—
Forgotten in the vehement travail
Wherein man sought thee as a Holy Grail,
The consecration of his heart's desires.
Oh, come not here as on some slavish night
At Carthage; shed no gleams
Of witchcraft from Toledo's blight;
Forego thine ancient domes and mossy towers
By ghostly streams,
Thy siren haunts upon the deeps;—
Look down, renewed upon these newer bowers
Where cloaked in gold Manhattan sleeps!
Despite thy beauty and thy might
Here still is fever unassuaged;
Behind our towers and chimneys caged
Are hearts that languish in the night.

Be thou to them both monstrance and pure host,
Their souls' refreshment; be the silver coin
The homeless beggar folds unto his breast,
Counting him richer than old Croesus' boast;
Be thou the mask of Pierrot dressed,
The starry carnival to join!
Proclaim thou here
A newer gospel ere the dawn comes o'er,
A newer song, a newer ointment pour
In coronation on Manhattan's shore.

GETTYSBURG

Who sleep at Gettysburg sleep well;
  A peace beyond the dreams of glory
Laps them in sunshine where they fell.
The very winds that croon them tell
  Of hatreds like a drowsy story;
Blue look the skies on where they dwell.

Ah, blanched with peace are Blue and Gray
  Who come to tread these uplands—slowly
Lest in the merest piece of clay
That holds a flower or lines the way,
  Some vestige of a heart-pulse holy—
Some comrade's heart—be stirred today.

But of that myriad host, ah, where
  Are they—the young, the loved, th' undaunted,
The warring brothers marshalled there,
Defiance in their seraph air,
  Their eyes with death's white beauty haunted,
Their hands to do, their souls to dare?

Hush, song; among these storied flow'rs,
  These pallid shafts and waving grasses,
Wake not such little plaint as ours;
See with what calmness nature dow'rs
  The silence of these meadow passes
In chastened sunlight, softened show'rs.

Not here their sole memorials—
  But where th' eternal rainbow quivers
Athwart the rush of waterfalls;
By gleam of lakes and cañon walls,
  By north and southland swirl of rivers,
Where eagle wings or bittern calls.

BALLADE FOR THE SIXTH HOUR

Good masters of the market-place,
I pray you cease your cries, and hear
The pilgrim messages of grace
From holy lands I bring your ear!
Nay, pass not so, fair cavalier,
Nor thou, my lady, in thy pride,—
No alms I ask beyond a tear—
For such as you my Saviour died.

Yea, pause and hear me, woman frail,
Whose jewels have the gleam of shame;
For thee, thou crone in rags, my tale,—
For thee, thou foundling without name,
For you as well, proud priests, the same—
Yea, clown and courtier, ere ye ride,
Draw rein and answer, was it blame
For such as you my Saviour died?

Nay, tears before the minster gate,
Ye blind, ye aged, and ye sore?—
Up!—'tis your festival of state,
So get ye in the sacred door,
And raise the cry until it roar
By every strand and mountain side,
From turret peak to dungeon's core,—
For such as you my Saviour died!

Prince,—from thy galleries look down
Upon our soiled and ribald tide,
And hear me—spite thy haughty frown—
For such as you my Saviour died.

TO OUR LADY

(From the Spanish of Fray Luis de Leon, Salamanca, 1528–91)

Virgin,—thou purer than the sun,
Glory of mortals, and of heaven the light,
Whose piteousness doth match thine high estate,—
Unto the earth oh bend thy sight
And mark a wretched prisoner undone
Amid the grief and darkness of his fate,
And shouldst thou find no doom to mate
With his, nor judgment equal to the wrong
Wherein through guilt of others he remains,
With hand divinely strong,
O Queen of Heaven, strike off the heavy chains!

Virgin,—to whose predestined breast
The Godhead came and found a pure repose,
Wherein thy sorrows to thy raptures turned,—
If meekly thou didst take the blows,
So now a breast serene canst manifest
From out the cloud-topped glories thou hast earned;
Show forth the brows where love hath yearned,
The boast of heaven as well the adored of earth;
Put by the mists and let the day shine clear;
Thy dawning, Lady of high worth,
Shall put to flight my gloom and blindness here.
Virgin and Mother joined in one,—
Who bore thine own Creator as thy Child,
Thou at whose bosom Hope itself took flower,—
Behold how sorrow hath defiled

And heaped my burthens till I lag undone;
Abroad stalks hatred; friendship sleeps the hour;
If thou assert no more the power
Of Truth and Justice that took birth of thee,
What other shelter is there left secure?
Yet thou art Mother—turn and see,—
And all is well with that which I endure.

Virgin,—whose garment is the sun
Whose brows are royal with eternal stars,
Whose foot sublime doth tread the crescent moon,—
Lo, venomed envy mars,
And lures that mock, and webs of slander spun,
Unsparing hate, and lawless might are soon
Conspired to waste my every boon!
To meet their horde accursed what avail
Such weak and meagre weapons as are mine,
If calling thee, O Mary, fail
To enlist thine aid amid the strife malign?
Virgin,—who triumphant bore
The raging serpent down to weep his loss,
His doom eternal, and defeated greed,—
Secure, full many gaze across
The river rushing by their placid shore
Where I am gasping out amid my need;
Some well content to see the deed;
Affrighted some; no more can pity there
But raise afar his fruitless voice of woe,—
Whilst I, mine eyes in tearful prayer
To thee, go floundering in the undertow.

Virgin,—unto the Father spoused,
Sweet Mother to the Son, thou temple shrine
Of Love's immortal Spirit, thou shield of man,—
Disasters haunt these eyes of mine,
For if I stay I am with dangers housed;
To go means peril; fate each step doth ban;
No pity knows the hostile clan;
Truth is stripped bare, and falsehood panoplied
With steel and weapons, till in misery
My life is to despair decreed
Save that I turn me with a sigh to thee.

Virgin,—who at God's high behest
Returned assent as humble as entire,
Thou whom the heavens are gladdened to behold,—
I am as target to their ire,
My shoulders bound, mine eyes of sight distressed,
With arrows hurtling on me hundredfold
That aim to wreak me ills untold;
I feel the wound though he that gives it hide,—
From flight shut off, my hand without a shield—
Thy Sovereign Child who ne'er denied
His loving Mother my relief will yield.

Virgin,—thou morning star benign
Across the sea of tempests shining down
With lights of guidance so the winds are stilled,—
The thousand billows are conspired to drown
A bark dismantled 'mid the gulfing brine
Without a ballast, sail, or oar, but spilled

And tossed as every whirlpool willed;
The night comes down; the airs with thunder quake;
Now rearing 'gainst the skies, now plunging low,
The yards and tackle groan and break,—
Help!—ere we strike upon the rock of woe!

Virgin,—unblemished with the stain
That is the common doom of humankind
Since that first disobedience was wrought,—
Full well thou knowest how my hopes reclined
On thee from earliest days, though sin hath ta'en
My claim and left my erring life with naught
Deserving of thy saving thought;
Yet be thy clemency so nobly shown
Till increase of its blessing shall extend
To match the measure of my moan;
The less my merit, thine the more amend!
Virgin,—the crush of sorrowing
Distrains my tongue; the voice of my desire
No more can speak aloud its humble plea;
Yet hearken thou the anguish dire
My soul unceasing opens unto thee!

WORLD RUNES

Hoar are the cloud-peaks when the day is done
In druid conclave round the mystic sun;
Night's silver eloquence of star and moon,—
The tides, the seasons, and the winds in tune,
Would, were their vast significance not vain,
Solve the enigma of our joys and pain
With words majestical as those the trees
Heave from their breasts unburthened by the breeze.
Ah, 'tis not utterance of theirs at fault!
Hath not the earth, and earths that star the vault,
A kindred language? This the heart of man
Instinctive fathomed when his race began,
Though now with soul left fallow, and grown cold,
No more interprets he those voices old.
Not so when down Cumæa's mountain ways
The leaves were scattered for the Sybil's gaze;
Not when the wizards on the isles of old
Bartered the fair winds for the Vikings' gold.
Deem you that secret perished? Nay, though worn
With bearing fruitless message, night and morn
Old Earth, as one in mortal travail, cries
For hearts to take her wisdom ere it dies.
Thus when by night beneath some harvest moon
Her vales seem gathered in ecstatic swoon
Of mystery and sadness; when the wind
Trumpets the morning; or the heavens are signed

For battle,—fain again would she essay
The ancient word that holds our souls at bay;
Her lips eternal, anguished, seem to part—
Ah, is it only silence fills our heart?

AD LIMINA

She lingered near the gates of heaven
  Although the Angels waved her on
Unto the Throne where bent the Seven
  At their eternal antiphon.

She saw the happy mortals enter
  To Bliss at last and fold their wings;
From out the pure Elysian center
  She heard their joyous gloryings.

But one came not, though still she waited
  And held here heaven from her breast,
Seeking the moment when 'twas fated
  His spirit too might come to rest.

The Great Archangel down came flying:—
  "Why gaze you still toward earth so dim?"—
She turned her gentle eyes, replying,—
  "I must be first to welcome him."

Take Thou away the chalice; take from pain
  Its final sweetness; stay the whips of hate
  That scourge so glorious in my thorns of state
Upon the pinnacle of man's disdain,—
Where every singing breaks a wound again,
  Though yet Thine ultimate voice I must await.
  Is this thy victory, Song?—or all too late
Am I responsive to thy holier strain?

Then spoke The Angel:—"Lo, the darkness breaks,
  Be patient!—for the perfect song is nigh
    To sear thy lips with flame of utmost loss.
See! that glad triumph through the cloud awakes,—
  And hold thee valiant till the Day comes by!"—
    And as he spoke the hills revealed The Cross.

FULFILLMENT

As that proud bird of eastern story
  Did pluck away from Persia's crown
The gem of wizardry and glory,
  I took my youth from Time's deep frown.

In splendor shook the bird to heaven—
  So too my heart outshone the star—
With burst of song its throat was riven,
  And glittering fell the gem afar.

Thus I—O loveliness Elysian,
  Cool brows of dawn, and rose-mouth dreamt upon!—
I turn to sing God's manifested vision,
  And find that youth is gone.

IV

NARRATIVE POEMS

EGIDIO OF COÏMBRA—1597 A. D.

The rumor came to Frei Egidio
In cloistered Santa Cruz, that out of Spain
King Philip's secret courier had fared
With orders under seal suspending all
The Statutes of Coïmbra that controlled
The contests for the professorial chairs,
And ordering the Faculty to grant
Padre Francisco Suárez primacy
Among the masters theological.
And Frei Egidio, whose ancient name
Fonseca was relinquished when at court
It shone its brightest, who had ceaseless toiled
His score of years in cloister and in schools,
Unravelling knotty texts, disputing long
With monk and doctor of the Carmelites,
Dominicans and Trinitarians,
Consulting with the students, visiting,
Fawning, and banqueting—himself and all
His faction in the University—
Now in the iron mandate from Madrid
Saw failure blight his hopes, and Santa Cruz
Eclipsed, through imposition unforeseen
Of Suárez de Toledo—only half
A monk!—a fledgling doctor in the Schools!—
And Frei Egidio unsleeping schemed
To check the rising of this Spanish star
Within Coïmbra,—and his henchmen went
Stealthy and sure to sow malignant seed

To choke the Hapsburg's new autocracy.
Stately was Frei Egidio, robust,
Swarthy and smooth his cheek; his raven locks
Piling about his tonsure in a crown.
Dark flashed his eye whene'er he rose to cast
His syllogistic spear across the lists,
Where many a mighty crest Minerva-crowned
Was forced to yield, or learnt the rapier thrust
Of his *distinguo* and *non sequitur*.
Still more he shone when in procession moved
The doctors, masters, and licentiates,
With tufted caps, and rainbow gowns, and stoles,
And ring, and book across the steeps and squares,
While gallant youths pressed round on horse or foot
Holding his robe or stirrup through the town—
The *Cathedrático da Véspera*.
But now this little shrivelled man sent out
From Salamanca,—Philip's paragon!—
To rule Coïmbra in theology!—
One of Loyola's strange and restless band
In the *Collegio de Jesús*,—reproach
To every gorgeous doctor in the halls.
'Twas true he hid away within his house,
Came seldom to the festivals or Acts,
Nor oft asserted his high presidence
O'er Frei Egidio—in craft or scorn,
It mattered not—for Frei Egidio
Would pluck him forth; no signet of the King
Could serve him here; the doctors of the Schools
Should learn how he, Fonseca, had been wronged.

With formal placards soon they smeared the walls
Of shrine and college, telling day and hour
And place, where Doutor Frei Egidio
Da Presentação, of the Eremites
Of São Agostínho, titular
Da Véspera, would his conclusions hold
"*De Voluntario et Involuntario*"
Against all-comers, and imprimis there,
The Doutor Padre Suárez, titular
Da Prima of Coïmbra, theologue
Of the *Collegio* and *Companhia*
De Jesús. From near and far they came,
And took their stated rank, and filed proudly
Into the Hall of Acts; the Chancellor
And Rector in their robes of silk, and fur,
And velvet, and great chains and seals of state;
The Bishop, and Inquisitor, and Dean,
And Chapter, in their purple; Canonists
In green; and Jurists in their scarlet gowns;
Frei Luiz of the Chair of Holy Writ,
In black and white of the Dominicans;
Frei Manoel of the Chair of Scotus, garbed
In white and brown of Carmel; titulars
In Peter Lombard and Durandus,—sons
Of Bernard, Francis, and Saint Benedict.
When each in order of his ancientry
Was seated in the tribune, and below
Ranged the licentiates, and bachelors,
And, out beyond, the thousand students,—gay
In plumes and ruffs, or rags and disrepair,—

There entered Bacharel Frei Constantino
Citing the *obligations;* whereupon
Egidio began his argument
With exposition and arrangement clear,
And summary abrupt and crushing, as
His old experience in the courts had taught,—
So free in tone and doctrine that the throng
Swayed on their benches, beating noisily
Great tomes together like the roll of drums.
Then silence for Suárez's *quodlibet;*
As half-reluctant, without emphasis,
His cold unwavering voice proposed the plan
Of his objection,—when uproarious
Upon the instant, Frei Egidio
In tones of thunder shouted o'er the hall,—
"*Nego majorem!*"—the scholastic world's
Unmitigated insult!—How would he,
Spain's boasted theologian, reply
To Portugal's? The Jesuits around
Suárez's rostrum marvelled, whispered, turned,
And hid their faces, when they saw him bowed
Silent a moment, ere descending, calm,
He led them home across the jeering town.
Then the mad acclamations; bells of shrine
And monastery on the hills; the sweep
Of robes prelatical, the cavalcade
Of gorgeous nobles into Santa Cruz;
The blare of trumpets, and the lanterns strung
Yellow beneath the moon; the beggar throngs;

The maskers down the lanes; the nightingales
And river-songs of students wafted far
Across Mondego's Hills of Loneliness
And Meditation where Coïmbra slept.
Thus triumphed Frei Egidio. But high
In the *Collegio de Jesús* the blow
Was red on every cheek; the Rector rose
In the community and said: "Padre
Francisco, not in fifty years have we
In our Coïmbra known such sore defeat;
Tell me, I pray, had you no thought to save
Your honor and the honor of our schools—
You, boast of Rome and Salamanca's halls,—
You, to whom all the dialectic arts
Have been as play—could you not parry, feint,
Or bait Egidio until some chance
Or newer turn might save your argument?"
Suárez bowed and answered: "Better far
That we be humbled than a great man fall
To utter shame and ruin! Had I told
Egidio there that in denying thus
My proposition he was challenging
A solemn canon, word for word, prescribed
At Constance by the Universal Church—
Fetch me the Book of Councils—he was lost."
Scarce was the secret spoken, ere it stole
In rumor through the novice-hall, and thence
Below to Santa Cruz,—stole, like a cloud,
Black, ominous, across the starlit dome

Above the proud *mosteiro,* where the moon
Revelled amid the sculptured lattices,—
The marble ropes and palms memorial
Of old Da Gama and his caravels,—
Upon the rose-paths and the trickling pools
Along the *Claustro de Silencio.*
There paced Fonseca, solitary guest
To catch the final crumbs, the laughter, far
Adown the stream, of lutes that mourned his feast,
When lo, a billet in his path! "*Awake,—*"
He read,—"*at Constance 'twas decreed. Thy voice*
Hath mocked the very words of Holy Church."—
No more,—yet in foreboding he made haste
To find his taper,—fumbled through the stacks
In dust and chill,—unclasped the folio
Liber Conciliorum,—saw his doom—
Perchance the rack and Secret Prisons—writ
Upon the parchment!—Silence, mocking lutes!
Come, rain! come, whirlwind! blot the lanterns out!
Now knew he their insidious subterfuge—
The slippery pharisees—to undermine
Coïmbra's last bright paragon,—they claimed
Another victim!—But his rage gave way
To grief; his scorn was all to blame; no scheme
Was theirs; Suárez spoke the Council's words
As duty bound him.—With the break of day
Came self-renouncement to Egidio;
And in amaze to greet his ashen face
The sacristan laid out for him the alb
And chasuble of Requiem; resigned,

Like some bowed reed the storm has swept by night,
He took the chalice, veiled it 'gainst his breast,
And 'mid the first faint glimmer down the nave
Crept forth unto his mystic Calvary.

A BALLAD OF OLD POPE JOHN

When there were Popes in Avignon
  Great wonder came to pass,
And there was cheer, and benison,
  At tourney, fair, and Mass.

Till John was Pope, and his feast was spread
  All on Apostles' Day
Whereon the beggar mouths were fed
  By cardinals in array.

They decked the papal shoulders old
  In robes of baudekyn,
And took his heavy chair of gold
  And proudly bore him in.

"Ho, Steward," did he whisper then,
  "Come hither unto me!
Did I not call for twelve poor men,
  Yet thirteen here I see?"

"Most Holy Father, grace I pray"—
  The steward blanched with fear—
"I fetched but twelve as for this day
  You bade me welcome here."

Pope John, astounded, looked around;
  "My cardinals and lords,
Are there not thirteen to be found
  Here seated at our boards?"

The courtiers all let droop their eyes;
The Gascon cardinal spoke—
"Your Holiness would deign surprise
His household with a joke?"

The Pontiff shook his head for nay,
"By Lady Mary, now,"
He cried and pointed, "Fellow, say,
I charge thee, who art thou?"

'Twas then the outcast raised his head
And threw his hood aside;
His face was like the unshrouded dead
As "Judas," he replied.

"And darest thou, accurséd one,"
Cried out the Pope in rage,
"To venture near the sacred throne
Where Christian men engage!"

The stranger scoffed— "Nay, I have sate
At higher feasts than thine,
Whereat Rabboni brake and ate,
And changed to blood the wine."

And seeing not whence came that sound,
The court went on its knees;
Pope John half staggered to the ground,
But the stranger kept his ease.

He drew his hood upon his head,
As though no more to heed.
Pope John raised up his Ring, and said,
"So must our feast proceed."

THE FEAST OF PADRE CHALA

(Tocaima, Colombia)

There are solemn figures walking up the roadway to Tocaima;
There are gestures and loud talking 'neath sombreros and umbrellas;
For the sun is shining brightly through the palms along the valley,
And the bells are tinkling lightly for the feast-day of Saint Thomas.
Padre Chala, with bandanna, stands and greets them from the doorway—
And the belfry rings Hosanna as they mount unto the chapel,
Padre Gomez de Camilla, on his easy-pacing *mula,*
And the Padre Carrasquilla, reining in his restive stallion.
While on foot come Fray Ansado, rector of the *Recoletos,*
Padre Ramon de Tejado, preacher from the *Jesuitas,*
And the portly Fray Rosildo, from the house of San Domingo.
And lean Fray Hermenegildo, from Our Lady de la Peña.
Carmelites and Augustinians, Escolapians and Marists,
All are airing their opinions, as they tread the dusty highway,
And their steps become the faster near the belfry of Tocaima,
Where the Padre Chala, pastor, is awaiting with his dinner.

In the early morn the squawking from the barnyard of the Cura,
Set the neighborhood a-talking of the chickens old Jesusa
Was preparing for the dinner of the feast-day of the parish.
What a spread for saint and sinner!—Cool *papayas, aguacates,*
Juicy *yuccas* and *melones,* with the *plátanos* and *piñas,*
And the *maizes* and *riñones,* from the *sopa* to the *dulces!*
As the Cura asked the blessing, and his guests were bowed in silence,
One could hear the parrot calling from the garden a petition—
"Pray for us!" (it was the *loro*) "Pray for us, O great Saint Thomas!"
As it learned it from the *coro* and had chanted and repeated,
Years without a variation— "Pray for us, O great Saint Thomas!"
And from this demure oration, it had never deigned to vary,
Though the brightest minds had striven, with most implicating questions
To have explanations given for devotion so exclusive;
But the Cura their endeavor answered— "Ask not what Saint Thomas—
'Tis our patron saint, however, our Saint Thomas of Tocaima!"
Padre Ramon, forward leaning, with his finger made objections:

"Yet the customary meaning of the Church in such connections,
With no other term appended, is to indicate Apostles—
So 'twould seem to us intended, that this sole ejaculation
Of the *loro,* is the Doubter—Thomas Didymus, Apostle!"
Fray Rosildo, red and stouter, choking down a piece of chicken,
Gave it out as his opinion, where there was a greater figure
In theology's dominion, such as Thomas the Aquinas,
That his claims should be admitted in the naming of the patron.
Padre Carrasquilla twitted Padre Ramon's orthodoxy,
Blinking through his glasses merry: "Should we seek distinguished patrons,
There is Thomas Canterbury, if we won't accept Apostles!"
While an Augustinian friar: "He, of Spanish Villanova,
Our Saint Thomas," he'd inquire—"how about him as a patron?"
While they argued, there came swooping o'er the patio a falcon,
Which dropped down upon the *loro,* scooping it amid its talons,
While the priests and servants hurried, as it rose above the garden,
Where poor Padre Chala worried, and bemoaned his ravished *loro.*
Sudden in the upper reaches of the noontide's blazing splendor,

Woke the startled *loro's* screeches: "Pray for us, O great Saint Thomas!"
And the frightened falcon, hearing, loosed its prey and soared defeated—
While the *loro* reappearing, took his perch and sat unruffled.
Then the Padre Chala, kneeling, with his pious guests around him,
Raised his broken voice, appealing: " 'Tis a miracle of Heaven!
Let us cease our disputations, raise no further points about him—
Praise Saint Thomas of Tocaima—none can question now or doubt him!"

THE BELLS OF BOGOTÁ

"Buen aire, buenas aguas, buenas campanas."

The boys of Candelaria, the church upon the hill,
Resolved to ring the Angelus with such tremendous skill
That not the oldest resident could raise his head to say
He ever heard a gladder peal in any month of May.
So when the sun went down below proud Minserrate's peak,
They swung their wooden mallets swift and bade the bells to speak—
To cry afar the Angel's words and Heaven's high behest:
"Hail, Full of Grace!—The Lord's with Thee—among all women Blest!"
They held their breath, for, suddenly, woke San Diego's tone,
A parish in the Virgin's praise that never was outdone,
Whose bells gave forth their gladness now in many a noisy throat
Of silver chiming rhyming to the mountain airs afloat.
Then from the town, a crowd of boys and men you might have seen
Run swiftly up the outer stair and climb San Agustin,
To smite their bronze with savage might amid the lofty air
And shake in blare and clangor rare a haughty challenge there.

Then rose like silver blossoming—"Hail Mary, Full of Grace"—

From Santa Clara's convent church upon the market-
place;
Whereat with clamor down the square, as if some portent
spoke,
The chimes of old Sagrarie from out their slumber woke;
And with a pompous booming raised the orison on high
And shook the windows of the town and seemed to shake
the sky.
In El Rosario the lads were stricken with amaze;
Instinctive at their college walls they turned impatient
gaze;
They cursed the hour, they cursed the tower that raised
no peal at all;
They hung their heads in shame to think they could not
join the brawl.
For in their belfry, wrenched and bent from out the
earthquake's blast,
There sleeps a copper giant from the forges of the past;
How it came from far Toledo over seas and deserts'
tides—
How they lurched it on the mule-backs up the savage
Andes' sides,
None has ever lived to tell us,—only this, it sounds no
more;
Quite a century has vanished since man heard its voice
of yore.
Then one exclaimed: "Our Founders' Bell if we but once
should ring
Would silence all these haughty chimes and down their
boasting bring!"

"Let's try!"—another shouted as they sprang upon the stair
And clambered through the cobwebs to the upper landing. There
In moss and grime from olden time it drowsed in silence proud
Till they struck it with their mallet and it heaved its soul aloud.

Such sound, so vast, so deep, so full, was never known before:
It seemed the heart of centuries had hidden in its core:
Toledo's lofty utterance, the holy kings gone-by
The primates and the viceroys seemed as one to make reply:—
"*The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary*"—so it sang;
"*Behold the Handmaid of the Lord!*"—it rang and rang and rang;
"*The word made flesh with us did dwell,*"—oh, what a note serene!—
"*Ave Maria! Ave Maria! Ave Maria! Queen!*"
All other sound was blotted out, and every wall and door
Trembled with holy sympathy beneath the mystic lore;
It measured forth the eighteen strokes prescribed by rite of Rome
And ceased, just as the Rector Carrasquilla from his home
Came thundering up the ancient stairs and shouted to them—"Stop!"—
For the belfry showed a mighty crack from the pavement to the top.

The chieftains and druids of Uladh would clothe him
in samite and gold
And set him on high at the feastings when sagas of
kings would be told,—
The battles, and courtships, and forays,—the boast of
their fathers of old.

Till one night as they crouched by their targets ere dawn
lit the spears on the plain
They called for Donn-Bo: "Let the watching of kings
be made glad with his strain!"
And he came o'er the armies of Uladh with blessings and
love in his train.

But he pleaded,—"High-King of Emaña, a boon for thy
minstrel, a boon,—
Grant but silence tonight ere the battle,—be glad with
thy hounds and buffoon,
And tomorrow Donn-Bo shall proclaim thee with music
at rise of the moon."

They quaffed the red mead till the chariots at dawn
over Uladh were hurled;
With the nightfall they gathered afar where the shreds
of their war-cloaks were furled;
And they pined for Donn-Bo, but he came not, though
moonlight was white on the world.

Clenched deep in his wounds was each fetish, the druids' enchantment was long:—
"Oh kings that were once over Uladh,—ye breasts that heaved haughty and strong!—
At dawn to the grasp of the hireling goes the beauty of life and the song!"

Then arose the rough Chief of Clan Connla: "Never yet hath the lad spoken lie,—
I shall forth through the marches and seek him!"—Yea, there, out afar lay awry—
A white corpse by the King of Emaña—Donn-Bo, like a star from the sky.

And around them the winds made the music they took from his harp strings of yore,—
Unhushed, though the hand of Clan Connla snatched the fair, severed head from the gore,
As it moaned, "Stir me not till the dawning when the rime for my king will be o'er!"

But Clan Connla made answer:—"The war-chiefs of Uladh are waiting their share."
And bearing it off by the tresses, he bade it to chant for them there
In the light of the torches, set high on a pillar, its *rann* of despair.

O never such story and music shall come from the minstrels of men,

As the mouth of Donn-Bo the belovéd gave forth in its
wizardry then!—
Never shall chieftains and druids sit round at such
feasting again!

Pale his cheeks—his step is slow,
  The fisher lad of David's Cave;
Only the waves his strong arm know
  Where his oars the black tides brave.

Silent he goes and his eye is sad;
  He comes no more to the crossroad's dance;
No maid on the coast his troth has had,
  No maid on the hills his glance.

But at noon when the sea is smooth and still
  He turns his boat to the cavern's shade,
Where chained and waiting his savage will
  A white sea-woman is laid.

Caught in the rocks she has screamed and torn
  Her wonderful hair and her eyes are red
From the tears and the shame her body has borne,
  And the pride of her heart is dead.

"O Tegid, Tegid," she chants him there,
  "Lad of the burning mouth and eyes,
Of the splendid shoulders and ruddy hair,
  Let me answer my people's cries—

"Let me free of the gloom of David's Cave,
  Let me out again in the fields of the deep;
They mourn for me upon every wave—
  They watch and wait without sleep!"

And the fisher lad her chains released
  And pointed forth to the open sea;
"Begone," he said, "my love hath ceased;
  You are no kin to me!"

And now she follows his boat afar,
  And winds herself in his nets by night;
His thoughts are of one on the harbor bar
  And the joys of the homing light.

But she is pale with the dashing foam,
  And her voice is faint and hoarse and strange;
She pines in vain and returns not home
  Where the white sea-women range.

Never a word will you hear at Maynooth
Of the pope they have lost; 'tis a bit of the truth
That is whispered at noontide by dingle and glen
Mid the tangle of daisies when lasses and men
Sit down from the harvest with stories of war
And of wonderment strange to the cities afar.
'Tis a secret avoided at wake and at feast
That is under the ban of the bishop and priest,
But is hinted at slyly as sudden winds sigh
In the chimney when blustery nights fill the sky,—
The story how Patsey the lad became pope
And was crowned with the crown and was coped with the cope,
How he wore the great ring on the back of his fist.
And held the white shoes on his feet to be kissed;
But one morning when springtime was burgeoning gay
To the notes of the lark he was gathered away
And over the mountains of Erin was gone
Through the gates of the morning and mists of the dawn.
Then a heavier loneliness fell over Rome
And a holier light lit the hillsides of home,
For it seemed in the spring that the smile of the lad
Down the blossomy trellises was to be had;
That the birds felt a stirring and sang in their nest
When the meads and sheep-pastures his light footing pressed;
That the violet glanced with his sparkle of blue,

That the light of his hyssop shone out in the dew,
That over the lover on tryst waiting there
Came touch of his blessing on lips and on hair.
There's many a tinker and fiddler could say
Strange things of the tapers that lighted their way;
Many a crone as she drowsed at her prayers
Heard him chanting and blessing the still vesper airs;
But never could anyone answer and tell
A word that could lead to his haunt in the dell,
When the purple processions at twilight drew near
And the cardinals hunted and bishops would hear
Where the young pope was lurking; none ever could
give
The track where he wandered, the place where he'd live,
Save over the mountains to beckon them on
To the gates of the morning and mists of the dawn.

THE STREET OF DOCTORS

In old Pekin a monarch reigned
Who in a high decree ordained—
"Each Doctor must a lamp provide
For every patient that has died,
No matter how they're multiplied;
On pain of death do we enact
That by his door each prophylact
Shall keep his score of lamps exact."
Then straightway with a blaze of lights
The Street of Doctors shone by nights;
The world of fashion more and more
Strolled up and down before their door,
And blessed the shrewd old monarch's cue
For such a brilliant rendezvous.

While "Feasts of Lanterns" shamed the sun
Around the porticoes of one,
His neighbor filled a lamp or two,
Rejoicing patients were so few;
Or else when things looked bright and bad
Brought on the case some likely lad,
And called in consultation him
Whose rival lamps looked all too dim—
(A game, though hardly after Hoyle,
Of how to save the midnight oil).
Yet while all Chinaland grew bright,
With spirit lamps, alas, what plight!
Dyspepsia fastened more and more

Upon their dear old emperor,
Until with tonsils, blue and furry,
He bade the mandarins to hurry,
And fetch, to ease his gripes and cramps,
The doctor with the fewest lamps.

By north and south and east and west
They journeyed on their slippered quest;
And made their census of the lights
Through glasses smoked to save their sights;
Or, wisdom-lighted, far would prowl
Through dismal haunts of bat and owl,
Cursing the darkened doors in wrath
Of osteo- and hydro-path;
Not knowing as they barked their shin
That every ill was cured within.
At last into the sacred door
They ushered to the emperor
A most tremendous, strange M. D.
Whose porch-lamps numbered only three—
Who called for fire and called for ice,
For plovers' eggs, and purple mice,
Nux vomica, and mermaids' toes
And chutney sauce, which he boiled and froze
And shook into a salmon tint,
And decked the cup with a sprig of mint.
The Son of Heaven was heard to gulp
As he tossed it down to the very pulp;
His eyes bulged out, and he muttered, "My, sir,
You certainly pour an appetizer!

But tell me, now, while your balm is working
How long have you been so darkly lurking?"
The M. D. stiffened down to his cue
As he noticed the emperor turning blue—
"O, Son of Glory, but yesterday
I got my practice under way;
Three lamps I lighted to make my score,
For the market was short of any more—
I mean no wrong to professional brothers,
So I hope tonight to display some others."

Ere yet the beard was dark upon the cheek
Of Feridun, he had set out with all
The Persian hosts to prove his might and arms
Against the Turks beyond the Caspian.
Beside his litter rode the Khan Abbas,
The Sheik of Zabor and the young Mihrab,
The Lord of Khonsor of the Doves.—Alas!
The Turks had swarmed upon them, overthrown
Their horsemen and their banners in the sand,
So a wild flight came on with vengeance-cries
And slaughter all along the shore, and death
Hung over them until a fisher bark
Hoved near and Feridun's last refugees
Piled on and with a mighty surge were swept
To sea beyond the Turkish scimitars.
"Allah is powerful to save!" cried out
The High Vizier Mazinderan as lunged
The fragile bark unwieldy through the waves
Beneath their weight; the frightened fisher knelt
To Feridun the Shah: "High Son of Heaven,"
He groaned, "the burden is too great and all
Must sink if some shall not make sacrifice
And Feridun would live!"—"And who shall first
Show fealty?" asked the Shah amid the hush,
Where every warrior minded of his oaths
Amid the tigress waves that gnashed the bark.
Proudly arose the young Khan Abbas, brave
And beautiful companion of the Shah:

"O Feridun, farewell! Remember thou
Of Abbas,—the green fields, our crimson jousts
And polo horses blue"—and at the word
He sprang into the sea and all the youth
Died from the heart of Feridun the Shah!
Up crept the Sheik of Zabor: "Lo, I pass
Unto my fathers, Shah; remember well
Our boast of starry spears, our leopard hunts
And campfires in the desert nights." Then he
Amid the waters too was swallowed down.
And then Mazinderan: "O Feridun,
Remember thou the chess of jade and gold;
The silvery pools along the garden path;
And of Mazinderan thy teacher old—"
The waves devoured him as he spoke the words.
Then Mihrab spoke: "Companion of the heart,
Forget me never and remember well
The arching eyes, the slender waists, the kiss
Beneath the golden moon of May, the lutes
And songs of Hafiz and our boyish loves;
Remember well!" And as he sank, the bark
Leapt to the wind and bore the young Shah home.

The springtimes gathered; soon the world forgot
The fair companions; and the ageing Shah
Hedged round with slaves and courtiers sat on high.
The feasts were royal, but their bitterness
Grated his heart upon the pillowed throne.
And now the night of the great feast had come
And he, a broken man, came down in state

To sit with the companion ghosts of yore.
Through Teheran the burst of rockets, gongs,
Rattles and chants proclaimed the royal will;
The skies were blazing with a million lights;
Rebecks and flutes and drums made gay the world;
And when the slaves had left the mitred Shah
Alone before the gorgeous board laid out
With plate and lamps of gold and precious wines
He raised his goblet to each empty seat:
"Hail to thee, Abbas, thou art ne'er forgot,"—
"To thee, my Zabor, faithful memory,"—
In turn he smashed his goblet 'gainst the lamp
That burned before places; Hail, Mihrab,
My best belovéd, thou didst die for me
That I might live—O ye that died in vain!"—
He smashed the lamp to darkness in its turn;
Then rising cast his own lamp to the ground.
The slaves in darkness found him, robed in state
Moaning alone—alone—while rockets burst
From up the alleys through the lattices.

THE CRY OF IBN-LEVI

RELATING THE HISTORY OF THE RUBY OF THE BLACK PRINCE NOW IN THE ROYAL CROWN OF ENGLAND

Abu-Saïd, Abu Saïd, woe upon the fatal day
When to plead with Seville's monarch on your steed you rode away!

By the Gateway of Elvira all Granada saw you go
Followed by your forty Emirs prancing gaily row on row.

With you went the crafty Edriz and the dwarfs and pages vain;
Twice a thousand pearls they carried, Persian trophies without stain;

But of all Granada's glories,—woe upon the day!—was none
Like the ruby on your forehead gleaming in the fatal sun.

You had cast the good Mohammed from the throne his fathers raised,
And within our fair Alhambra bade your name alone be praised;

Abu-Saïd, Abu Saïd, little praise you heard that day
When the King Don Pedro smiling led you forth to joust and play;

Clad you in *kaftán* of purple as a royal guest should wear;
Led you forth to be the target for his horsemen tilting there.

With their jousting reeds they slew you, yea, and all your Emirs proud,
Whilst Don Pedro, and his women, and his hirelings laughed aloud.

Through the Gateway of Elvira back he sent your gory head;
Well we knew its cruel visage and its curling beard of red.

"Greeting to good King Mohammed from Don Pedro of Castile!"
Cried his herald through Alhambra, panoplied from head to heel.

Abu-Saïd, Abu Saïd, woe upon that fatal day,
When we saw that on your forehead nevermore the jewel lay!

For his gift we thank Don Pedro—'tis a dish to feed our hates—
Would to Allah you had perished ere that ruby left our gates!

Still I remember the dread morn they came
Across the mountains; how the sudden flame
Leaped from the castle windows, and the cry
Of fear and rapine echoed on the sky;
While I, poor outcast, called Maruja then,
Watching the village goats, saw from the glen
Our hill-folk slain at every hovel door,
And ravening horsemen smeared with foam and gore
Sacking the shrine. They snatched me up and fled
Across the passes. All that night the red
Of signal fires shone on the peaks, the sound
Of warning bells rose from the vales around.
Swift were their barbs, for at the dawning light
I saw Granada's plain, and ere the night
Its market-place, wherein they led me out
And sold me weeping 'mid the din and shout.
'Twas a good price, wise Edriz, that you paid
For me, a wild thing from the mountain glade!
When you had seen me bathed and perfumed sweet—
My hair all unguents, robed unto my feet—
In Persian silks and pearls in strings that glowed
Like rainbow fetters—then along the road
At morn you led me on a palfrey white
Across the city squares and up Alhambra's height.
Yet, beautiful was Yussuf on that day
He welcomed me! They bade me bend and say
"Salaam," and then he took me by the hand.
All cloth of gold his raiment was, a band

Of diamonds on his forehead, when he spoke
And named me first "Arifa" there awoke
The woman in my breast; the flush of shame
And rapture coursing swiftly through my frame
Was sign I loved him.—But 'twas ever so
With each new plaything from the mart below;
For there was none like him to touch the lute
And stringed *kanun;* the nightingales were mute
In ecstasy to hear his voice; his smile
Was as the springtime through some pearl-strewn isle.
And oft at twilight, spell-bound 'neath his glance,
We heard him read *ghazál* or fond romance
Of his own fashioning,—some precious phrase
From Hafiz or Ibn-Zemric or the lays
Of old Firdausi's Book of Kings, enscrolled
On vellums stained in scarlet and in gold.
That I outshone them,—I, Arifa, tree
On which his daylight blossomed—that for me
All yielded place upon his bosom there—
Zora the Malagan, Zoraida rare,
From Kairouan, Algeria and Spain—
Served but to whet my restless heart with pride
Of conquest. Soon they taught my hands to glide
O'er ivory-fret *tanbúrs,* my feet to glide
In tinkling anklets, craftily to trace
My lids with stibials, my finger tips
To stain with henna; framed my northern lips
To murmur prayers to Allah, songs and praise
To Yussuf in their jewelled Arab phrase,—
Yet spite his treasures, spite Alhisn's retreats,

Its fountains, lutes, and perfumes, gems and sweets,—
Spite of them all, had I not solace found
In Yussuf's love, no blandishment or bound
Had kept me long from plunging from the height
Upon the roofs below. Even so at night
When on the terrace I could steal alone
And leave the ceaseless revel, weary grown
Of Eastern tale from out Scheherazade,
Of tittering dwarfs, of chess of gold and jade—
Up from the depths of some Granada street
Would rise at times a serenade blown sweet
And wild,—such times came thoughts, swift like blows
Against my forehead. Had the heaven that gave
No father to me, meant me for a slave
Though born of mountain blood? Then when I heard
In spring or autumn the returning bird—
The flocking swallows from Morocco's shore,
Twitter and call outside the tower once more,—
It seemed the glamour died from Yussuf's eyes;
I shrank from his fond arms with smothered cries
Among the silken pillows.—Thus the years
Wore on; then came—one midnight—on our ears
The rush of *Askari* across the Court
Of Cisterns; at the gateway loud report
And voices clamoring, "Open." Peering out
We saw 'twas Abu-Saïd with his rout
Of guards and torchmen. Silent terror fell
On our Alhisn. Again the citadel
Rang with the summons, "Open!" From on high
Yussuf behind the lattice made reply:—

"Vizier of mighty Ismaïl, the hour
Is late that brings thee to our fortress tower;
Speak, is there message from Granada's King,
Whose name be ever blesséd, thou dost bring?"
Then Abu-Saïd answered:—"Message none
From Ismaïl bring I tonight, O Son
Of Mightiness,—but tidings thou must know;
Death's Angel Azrael hath stricken low
Thy brother Ismaïl; thou now art Lord
Of Sceptre, Key and Diadem and Sword."
But Yussuf cried:—"Nay, 'tis some baleful dream
Hath witched thee, O Vizier, that thou shouldst deem
Great Ismaïl dead; no portent of the night,
No comet blazes, such as marks the flight
From earth of souls like his!"—"Nay, in the gloom
Great Azrael marked thy brother for the tomb.
Throw wide Alhisn's resounding fortress gates;
Come thou and rule Alhambra!"—"Lo, what fates,
What tempests ask you that the poor caged wing
Shall brave? 'Tis for the eagle to be king
Of the Sierras! Mine the lizard's state
Warmed in the sunshine at my brother's gate."—
But as they spoke across the courtyard wide,
Approached the royal litter, stretched inside
Beneath the torchlight the dead Ismaïl lay,
A king in death! Still Yussuf in dismay
Lest Abu-Saïd with some fatal snare
Contrive to seize him, draped his garment rare
About my shoulders, on my forehead bound
The princely turban; then upon the ground

Lurked hidden 'mong the slaves. With arméd clang
They passed our gates; the trembling arches rang
Proclaiming Yussuf. Stealthily he drew
Beside the litter, creeping till he knew
And touched the body; cold indeed in death
Lay Ismaïl, lifeless there without a breath—
Then Yussuf rose on high and I was cast
Beneath him with a gesture as he passed.
'Twas dawn ere with the drums and gongs he went
Beyond the Lion's Court; the battlement
Flaming the signals to the mountain forts.
Then closed the gates on us; Alhisn's far courts
Shook with the clamor of the bolts. How gray,
Alas, how drear—that lonely break of day!—
But his Arifa, his sweet tree of day,
Had all her blossoms too been swept away,
That never to Alhambra's royal bower
He summoned her?—yea, never from that hour
Returned unto Alhisn!—They brought me word
He craved the parrot, a sharp witted bird
That spoke some quips from Sadi; once again
Did he recall me, once, but only then
To claim anew the ruby called "The Heart
Of Andalusia." Where we lay apart
And half forgotten in Alhisn, there still
Came rumors of revolts. The times were ill.
The tribute heavy, ceaseless out of far
Sevilla came King Pedro's threats of war.
Yea, even Alhambra's hallowed walls could hear
The taunts of some rash Christian cavalier;

And once at twilight, too, a serenade
Came wafting up for his Alhambra maid.
It set my heart a-dream with stories told
Of fond sultanas who, in days of old,
Braved these sheer depths at some true knight's appeal
And o'er the mountain passes gained Castile.
But I—were it for me that gallant's song—
Could I return as poor Maruja 'mong
The village folk?—Arifa, I whose praise
Granada's poets sing—whose flower of days
Is still at bloom? Could I return and know
The people of my race, and veilless go
Throughout their cities, learn to make the Cross,
And count the Ave bells? If so, what loss
To Yussuf?—he whose feasts were spread around
The Court of Myrtles, he with beard enwound
With jewels, tossing coins in yellow play
Into the pools of goldfish all the day:—
Then *ay de mi!* that morn when at the doors
They flung him back amid their jeers and roars
Of Abu-Saïd's guards!—his futile reign
Annulled, his tinsel sceptre snapped in twain
At that dread upstart's whim! Alhisn anew
Lit up its lamps, the *arrafias* blew
Their mellow pastorals; santal and musk
Breathed from the perfume urns. Yea, now the husk
Of Yussuf's days was ours, his painted smile
And gruesome touch—life seemed a task too vile!—
Yet with myself I still kept faith. That thing
Misshapen, imbecile, the slaves did fling

To us was Yussuf, victim of a fate
Inflexible as ours! That I should hate
As once I loved, what woman is there born
Would blame me to revenge my months of scorn?
And yet all loathsome derelict he was,
Had he not been my prince of love, the cause
Of all my rapture, all my bitterness?
Though he had wronged me, it was mine to bless;
And I would save him when again they broke
Into Alhisn.—I wrapped me in his cloak
Again to screen him;—but he thrust me by,
And cried exulting—"*Askarí*, 'tis I,
Your monarch Yussuf! Lo, once more ye come
To throne me o'er Granada!"—Stricken dumb
They paused an instant—then the scimitar
Clove him in twain!—Thus rose the dripping star
Of Abu-Saïd!—Nay, he gives no thought
To us, with ice they say his veins are fraught;
To rule is his sole madness; but 'tis said
King Pedro's name eats up his heart with dread;
And as for me—what monarch comes or goes,—
My life must be the same within this close
Of domes and gardens. Still the poets sing
Arifa's fate—of her whose broken wing
Hath doomed her to a cage; yea, still at eve
Across the ramparts come wild songs that leave
My heart a-thirsting for the mountain streams
And then I smile—and sometime weep—o'er dreams.

DON FOLQUET

I

The apple orchards on the hills were white
With blossoms, and the languid clouds beyond
Lifted like polar mountains in the blue.
There where the little road went down the vale
Besides the River Argens, Folquet heard
The springtime murmuring across the lands,
The chirruping of birds, the herdsman's voice,
The human echoes from the fields afar.
And yet he came not from his hidden lodge
Among the trees, but with a thoughtful eye
He marked the throngs of dames and gallants pass
Upon their dappled palfreys, brightly gay,
Under the blos'my archway of the road,
Even though at times amid their mirth a lute
Struck careless off a broken stave or two
Of his *aubade*, "The Blossom Time of Spring"—
Struck careless—but amid his sombre mood
He hardly heard, so deep was he in thought.
What had come o'er him—once the gayest voice
Of all the choristers of love—that he
Had fallen from grace within so many a bower,
And, half-forgotten, felt no joy awake
At May's returning?—he whose song of old
Was fabled for its springtime melody;
He who once led the fairest troop afield,
Won beauty's rarest favors and the name
Of "Prince of Poets" in the northern lands;

He, for whose smile the grandest dame was feign
To pledge her honor, for whose meed of song
The haughtiest lord forgot his lowly birth,
And bade him welcome to his halls of state.
Nigh fifteen years had passed since that spring morn
When he, a stripling grown, full tall and fair
Came first to join the hillside jousts of song.
He could recall the older singers' smiles,
As in his heavy robes of silk and furs,
His chain of gold, his jewelled cap and belt,
He, the rich trader's son of old Marseilles,
Struck his first preludes as they moved aside.
And how the listless dames with sly remark
Measured his lithesome form, and subtly scanned
His cheek half blushing, and would meet his glance
Soft with the spring and shaded 'neath the sweep
Of ebon lashes and entangled hair.
And when the Countess at his *salutz'* close
Leant from her rustic throne and smiling bade
Him welcome, 'twas the very breath of heaven;
He felt his life indeed begin; the warmth
Of all his boyhood leaped into his eyes.
Then when the gallant company arose
Upon her signal, moving toward her halls,
As in a trance he fed upon her grace,
Trembled at every pulsing of her breast,
With heart's suspense at each intending step;
Until the kindly Abbot at his ear
Whispered,—"Son, take thy lute and follow, where
Beauty and Heart's Delight and Glory call."—

So from that day he sat beside her chair,
And marked the envious lordlings whispering round;
Heard the old poets singing of old days,—
Though she, the far-famed Magnet of the North,
Lent ear to him alone. She was the sun
That set his heart abloom, his songs broke forth
Like morning blossoms. At their lady's joy
Her maiden throngs took up and passed along
The countersign till all the land was gay
Because Alázais placed her love in him.
In memory too came back that twilight hour
When she within the tower with him alone
Said sweetly,—"Knight, you seek a lady's love,
Yet never speak her name." And he replied,—
"She is too great a crown for my poor heart
To wear, but it grows larger at the thought
Of her."—"Thy modesty, Don Folquet, well
Gives augury of thy success in love,
But scarcely in thy heart the passion glows.
There is a lady here that holds thee well
And fain would form thee for the courtier's part.
Kneel thou and kiss my hand, for I do take
Upon me thine instruction." And he bent
Upon his knee, when she with sudden hands
Clasped his young cheeks and pressed a kiss upon
His boyish mouth. . . . Suddenly a deep blush
Swept his whole body, head to foot, for ne'er
Before, save at his mother's lips, had he
Known kisses, and the surging wave that stirred
From novel passions threatened to o'erwhelm

His senses. Then she smoothed his hair, arranged
His pourpoint; tightened up his garter-bands,
And promised him a gift of perfumed soap
To make his daily bath. Full soon a squire
And pawing steed she sent to wait him, black
And sleek, below the tower stair, to bear
Him forth in Sire Barral's proud train, on days
Of hunt or festival. Ah, fleeting years
Of carollings at Eastertide; and groups
Beneath the apple-blossoms; of harvest-songs
Amid the spurting grapes; of Noël watch
At midnight and the crackling of the logs
In the great hall where they would sit around:
And then the change—when all the world of grace
Was tuneful with his praise, when dame with dame
Competed for his singing, and even Eudoxia,
The Grecian emperor's daughter, strove in vain
To lure him to her amorous northern towers!—
He had achieved the triple crowns—held gold
In plenteous store for every need; and fame
Fulfilling all his dreams of song; and love,
The fairest hand in Christendom had signed
That he might hope; the lips to which noblesse
And courtesy gave primal place had pledged
His servitor with the solemn kiss that made
His sovereignty in love's imperial courts.
But yet, the change, that 'mid it all began
Within his heart; the voice that ceaseless asked,—
"Why sing—there is no more to gain; why hoard—
Thou canst dispense no more; why love, poor moth,—

Thy silken web is spun to impede
The wing with which thy soul would fain escape.
Thou art like some poor Paynim maid who longs
To change her freedom for the latticed bowers
Behind the Soldan's citadels; who when
She finds her warmest wish fulfilled, at last
Amid the gardens of her soul's desires,
Finds herself also changed, and sighs in vain
For desert wildness 'mid her golden cage."
Yes, through it all the solemn voice kept on
Though he would twang his gayest string and lead
Gallants and ladies, through his maddest routs,
Thinking to still it—but in vain. And when
Upon the castle terrace in the moon
He struck the oldtime serenades of love
His fingers half refused the amorous task
From which onetime they hardly were restrained;
The glowing passion and luxuriant wealth
Of Fancy faded from his verse and left
Dry wisdom to infuse his polished tropes
And metres stately cold as colonnades,
That left the heart as cold. And when the hand
He sought was granted to his lips, he found
A pleasure half malign to read the bone
And sinew through its velvet white, and felt
Distaste at all the courtly mockery,
Like a sick eye upon the senseless flowers.
So it had been these latter years, until
The mood upon him showed athwart the mask
Gay years and forms had set upon him, till

The smile with which he opened every heart
Grew sharp and knowing, and the soulful eye,
Opulent of vision, lost its glow and showed
At times a rodent craft and scorn of all.
And soon the ears that harkened him along
Craved various entertainment of the lutes
That came in wandering trains unto the courts—
Some Eastern jongleur in a Templar's suite;
Some mime Italiot in an Abbot's court,—
And when he would rehearse some classic theme,
Trace the awakening of the poet's soul,
Or point the silent path of contemplation,
Such vagrant roisterers would raise at times
A *rigodón* that set the hall afoot,
A mad *stampida* until one by one
His reverent group would steal to join the crowd
Whose riotous laughter gained and gained until
It drove him from the court.—
And so he kept
Disdainful state within his little lodge
Between the hills where Argens flowing smooth
Wound its fine silver spiral to the sea;
Where night and morning alternated calm;
Among his squires, a faithful lad or two,
He found the shining days beget remorse;
A heavy tome at nightfall by the lamp,
A glass with some wayfaring Crusader,
Or boon companion from the abbey near;
A frolic with his gray Italian hounds;
And now and then some jongleur faring by

Would stay the night to raise the oldtime songs
Or learn the new ones; or some graver sage,
Come from the court or from some foreign land,
Bespoke him "Master" and did reverence
For some far prelate, lord or chatelaine,—
To this, to this alone his dreams had led!—
This promise of eternity of Fame
When all the idle singers of the day
Should be as though they never lived, or sang,
The while his studied song—held now but craft
And studious research—should be received
As mould immortal of a mind supreme!
How cold the heights to which his stars had led!
Now too, when through the apple-blossoms came
The laughter bringing to his heart again
An oldtime flutter hardly stilled as yet,
Was it for him no more? Scarce thirty years
Had passed upon his head, where not a touch
Of gray was visible, his supple form
But for an added grandeur had exchanged
The lithesomeness of youth; the trace of thought
Had but infused his eyes with greater fire
And marked him out among the chiefs of men.
The field and tourney and the hunting days
Had set a touch of mastery in his mien,
While song and lady's bower had given the grace
Of flowing vesture and unstudied pose.
With these was he to be forgotten?—no,
Although the prize seemed worthless, he would play
The piteous game again,—tonight—tonight.—

Yellow the moon upon the far campaign;
It was a night for love,—how many, oh,
How many such his memory harvested
In honey-stores!—The bells struck out the hour
Of nightly office from the distant tower;
The air was heavy with memorial scents
Of roadside blooms that rose as ghosts again,
And o'er them hung in springtime Pentecost
The trailing fireflies with their tongues of flame.
Soon up the pathways of the town his steed
Began to bear him. Well the portals knew
His stately mien; the castle court stood wide
For days and nights of peace; the lighted hall
Resounded with the chatter as of old;
The windows streamed aglow; the jesters' bells,
The tuning lute, the laughter long and hoarse
Of kitchen wenches with their amorous swains
And guardsmen sounded 'round at his approach.
Then the great doors swung open, and he passed
From the blue phosphor into golden light.
Then the good Sire Barral cried welcome hale;
The ladies rose and curtsied; all the lutes
Grew silent, and the youthful singers gazed
Reverent on his noble form; while awed
Stood strangers in the hall—a travelling friar,
An jongleur bound for far Auvergne, a Moor
Of Tripoli, a wealthy rabbin clad
In velvets, furs and heavy chain of gold.
The shaggy hounds glared long from where they
stretched

Along the pavement, where the pages scarce
Had ceased their boyish gambols, and the swish
Of silks and velvets, and the play of pearls
And merry eyes with light; the scent of cloves
And jonquils,—all, so framed within
The blackened oak and carving of the hall,
Looked so familiar that it scarcely seemed
A fortnight since he first beheld the scene.
And she—Alázais—with her bright-eyed maids
Around her, with exquisite courtliness made sign
For room for him; the dwarf and minstrel youth
Withdrew, setting a cushion by her side.
He gazed and saw her fairer than of old;
The polished roll of hair melting in curls
Around her ears and down her slender neck
Where ancient pearls hung heavy in a row
Over her robe voluminous and rare
With velvet, furs and jewels at the belt,
And flowing sleeves and Eastern chatelaine . . .
"Faithless, Sir Poet, hast thou been indeed,"—
And as she spoke the childlike eyes of blue
Turned on him and the gracious lips' soft curves
Struck heavenly weakness through his every sense.—
"Faithless, indeed, to that fair lady here
Within our courts who in that lute of thine
Lived peerless 'mong the ladies of all lands.
Has she been heartless, Folquet, or abused
Thy gallant service, that thou far'st apart
And leav'st her here to other suitors' songs?
Is this the deathless service of thy soul,

Of which in springtime gone thou sang'st so sweet
That all the courtly universe stood still
To listen and bow before the Prince of Song?"
And he made answer: "O sweet lady, grace
For him who once among the blossoms white
Came to thy throne when childhood melted soft
With scarcely blossoming woman in thy cheek;
Years hath he sat beside thy feet and told
The story of devotion at the shrine,
Whose gracious patron's name his breast alone
By law of ancient courtliness must keep.
Unknown the idle dreamer came and sang
When all true lovers listened; for the spell
Her beauty fostered lent itself to sound,—
In her the magicry of song, in her
The essence of his courtliness.
For he was but the lute whereon her smile
Trembled to singing and wherein her eyes
Set prayers to throbbing aspiration soft;
And while his hope remained, her beauty proud
Was life for him, was song for him, and fame.
But ah, sweet lady, and you, fair maiden throng,
Within the garden by the donjon keep
At twilight hour have ye not marked the moths
With heavy wing seek wearily their mates;
And some against the brazier screen will dash,
And some within the taper singe their wings,
Consumed for their desire within the flame.
But others on their clumsy wings turn up
To reach the star that trembles to their heart.

Nightly they rise, but only to despair
Of her unchanging beauty, till the night
Conceals their piteous questing and the winds
Of autumn chill their hearts with failure; so,
Sweet ladies, is it with your Prince of Song;
For lighter wings salute the star tonight,
And she is fair and radiant for all.
Though she may pity, still she must remain
The star, and fate hath made us as the moth.
Only remembrance of her now is song,
Song almost turned to prayer—the moth no more
Sees her in love, but in divinity."—
The elders gazed upon him half in awe;
The churchmen seemed submerged in thought; alone
The Abbot smiled serenely still; and she
Held forth her regal hand that he might kiss,
Saying,—"O Folquet, had the star a voice
Think'st thou it might not rival the poor moth
That puts its deathless song to melody
And dies immortal, leaving her to hold
Her soul imprisoned in its adamant?"—
And as he bent before her the light notes
Of a *tornada* seemed to rouse the group;
The maiden glances met as if in joy;
The lordlings half uneasy and attent
Stirred in their place to herald in a dance.
"A dance!"—the jester cried and caught the maid
Who just had set the Countess' curls aright,
And swung her in her billowy skirts until
Both like a top careered. "A dance!"—outcried

Count Barral,—"it will stir your pulses, so
The wine shall taste the sweeter: To the dance!"
The lutes and harps struck up; the Countess rose
Holding her hand to Folquet as she smiled,—
"Your hand, Sir Gallant, we shall lead the throng
As in the merry days by smooth Argens."
The youths and maids stood ready in a line;
The Abbot whispered at Count Barral's ear;
Each damsel set her velvets at their best;
The squires slapped their shapely boots, and threw
The heavy mantles from their shoulders back.
Then Folquet and the Countess slow began
The stately dance; a touch of marvelling
Fell on the court; the matchless grace of both,
Their management of draperies, the turn
Of shapely head and shoulder, and the ease
And spirit of their mien! Never before,
Even in her earliest bloom, had been her grace
So noble and serene; the pride of race
And state combined with simple gentleness
Until even rugged Count Barral cried out,—
"Countess, you never danced like this before!"
And Folquet, all his native grace and ease
Chastened by proud simplicity, his form
At the full splendor of its flower; the poise
Of Jove-like head, the eye ecstatical,
And the light touch of some fatality,
Graced him, as at some rite the ancient priests
With David moved in dance before the Ark.
But in his heart the folly of it all

Clutched at his breath almost to force the scorn
Upon his lips, but for high courtliness;
And thought like fire seared athwart his breast,—
"They keep their poets but to dance, like bears
The travelling fairsmen lead about in chains!"
And as he swung in grand obeisance 'round
To smile upon the Countess— "This our gift
Divine to patter time upon the floor
With indolent women, oh! the shame of it!—
To glad these boors and lackbrains, while beyond
They say the stars are calling us! And when
We would proclaim their message to the heart
They steal from us to those who will keep up
The ceaseless *rigodóns,* dragging us thereto
In chains of love with them, our feeble hearts
Have woven, slaves of earth and misery;
While underneath God shows our chosen souls
The fire that yawns for earthlings, the dead fate
Of sinners for whose thoughtless souls in vain
He has outpoured His blood! And what reward
Have I for all this trifling with my soul?—
A love turned worthless as the hair turns gray;
A love that yet enthralls me to the dust,
While at my heart a voice keeps thundering,
'Eternity! Eternity!'—Like some
Poor climber who amid the branches light
Dares not go on, and dreads even to return,
I stand upon the very brink of Hell;
Yet fearful of an idle sneer, decline
To draw me back from out my perilous strait."—

Then as he knelt to kiss his partner's hand
At finish of the dance, he thought within,
Though outward smiling:—"God, the mockery
Of all this stupid rout, while at our feet
The flames seem crackling! O unfaithful heart
Of mine, who will be faithful, shouldst thou fail?
I sing but as a debt to folly, and love
Itself grows weary unto me—yes, weary
With beauty of fair forms, of smiles, of joys,
Of nature's seasons grown monotonous!
And oh, my soul, thinkst thou that to the fruit
Of Paradise, thy steps shall come, thus stayed?
To what strong hand of evil hast thou given
The keys of thy poor life? And see, the world
Smirks 'round and calls thee 'Prince of Song,' until
The very sound breeds madness,—think, if it
Be terror but to think of life upon
This bed of earthly surfeit,—think—oh, think,
Eternity upon a bed of flames!"
The sweat stood on his brow; the grim thought seemed
To wring his very vitals, and he rose
Weak and all-desolate, the clang of lutes
Wild in his ears—as all the gallants turned
To take their places for another dance
With careless laughter and new-fangled moves.
A moment more he paused beside the deep
Embrasured casement till Alázais,
Oblivious of all, but of her curls,
Her train and trinkets and the boyish smile
Of light Sir Miraval, her newest sprout

Of courtliness and song, moved out to dance.
The silver spiral of Argens called forth
Across the moonlit scrolling of the hills.
Unmarked he hastened forth, and passed along
The gloomy passages into the court.
There by a yellow lamp that seemed to smirk
In envy at the moon his esquires sat
With other menials at a rough repast.
When while they brought the horses forth from out
The shadows of the mews, he heard behind
The Abbot's voice approaching, and he sprang
Into his saddle, as the churchman came
Out at the door, and called,—"Tarry a while,
My son, until my steed be ready, then
Shall we ride forth together." So, they passed
Through the white outskirts of the sleeping town,
By snowy bridges, where the flecks of bloom
Rippled before them like a foam-tipped surge;
They heard the bells of Torondet afar
Tolling sonorous peace unto the stars.
The city lights were lost behind the hills
As the swift steeds sped on along the road
Beside Argens where now and then a frog
Croaked at the marge,—a gleaming trout sprang up
And vanished almost like a falling star.
In silence Folquet and the Abbot rode
Ahead; the squires and novices kept up
Their youthful chatter far behind; at times
Around the hills the mounted monks' white hoods
And habits and the glittering of the steel

And trappings of the squires would lend a touch
Of spectral to the band; and when at length
Between the heavy trees the pathway led
Apart to Folquet's dwelling, the old monk
Laying his hand upon the poet's arm
Whispered:—"There is no slumber there, my son;
At Torondet thy cell stands ready, come;
Tonight the heavens are calling thee; look up,
Thy destiny hath made thee for the stars!"—
And Folquet melting almost into tears
Raised the old Abbot's ring and kissing it
Said,—"Father, thou sayst aright; yea, I would gain
My soul's reprieve; lead me to Torondet."

II

Ten times the orchard slopes of Torondet
Had borne their fruitage, and ten times the spring
Passed with its blossoms over hedge and vine;
The bells by day and night communed on high
With holy calms; and from the cloister church
Incense and prayer and sacrifice arisen.
But not in those grim towers had passed the days
As in the fretted shrines of Italy
Or in the glittering sanctuaries of France,
Where monk and prelate swept in ritual train;
But like a fortress set against the world
The walls of Torondet amid the hills
Spoke out defiance. There had Folquet dwelt
Until his cowl itself had come to seem
A very part of being, and the paths

And arches of the cloister took the scope
Of all the world. There in his daily tasks
Of prayer and office, feast, and fast, and work
In his still corner of the Scriptory
He one by one rubbed out the stains of life,
Its frail affections, its distractions vain,
Till, if by chance a minstrel down the road
Touched at his lute, he hardly heard or raised
His head from off his frame of vellum skin,—
So had his century been lost to him.
But not at first his cloister was secure;
A word dropped lightly in the pilgrim's hall,
An ancient name repeated on the scrolls,
Set all his heart ablaze, and some from afar
Would gaze on him who had been "Prince of Song,"
Whereat he drew the hood upon his face.
At times across the sunlit hills would float
The hunting horn; or in the spring a band
Of dames and courtiers wandered down the road,
And something clutched like a tiger at his throat,
Until he fled and cast himself in fear
Before the sombre shrine—and they were gone.
The nights to him grew terrible; his cell
Echoed the trumpets of a hundred kings;
Tourneys and battles swept across his dreams,
And in the throng came women he had loved,
From Genoa, Marseilles and Syria.
Among them one there was with empress' crown,
And one, whose lovely arms were bruised with chains,
Used the sweet voice of old:—"O Folquet, thou

That slumberest in a distant cell hast shared
With me the joys for which my lord, Barral,
Dooms me today within my buried pit.
Alázais am I—hast thou forgotten?
See, where thy kisses were, now dungeon rats
Have bitten! Would I had fled with thee
While there was time! Would that thy lips were mine
Here in this dungeon, so the pit of hell
Might take us both in that embrace! Alas,
Think not that thou canst steal to heaven alone;
God is no earthly prince that thou canst cheat;
Throw off that cowl, thy courtier robe was best;
Thou canst not pander to a God so just!"
And at the matin bell the brothers saw
How like a corpse he sat within his stall,
Nor took that day his humble crust of bread,
Nor silence broke within the times allowed.
Then when they sang the Noël midnight Mass
Before the peasants gathered from the hills,
His voice was hardly heard; but when the chant
Rose o'er some brother's corpse, at *Tenebræ*,
They heard his *Miserere* like a knell
Trembling among the arches to a sob.
The younger brothers paled when he intoned,
"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return
Unto the Lord thy God!"—so terrible
His accent!—So it passed that he was held
A saint uncanonized, and prelates came
To crave his prayers and wisdom,—till one day
A Templar, resting in the hall, announced

The tidings from Marseilles, that Barral's wife,
Alázais, had died. And Folquet heard,
Nor spoke nor gave a sign, but sat before
His vellum all the day like some carved piece
Of stone, until the master saw his state
And had him carried, senseless, to his cell.
And on the vellum they beheld this song—
Upon the margin, last of all he wrote:—

"How the weary years are sped,
That they tell me scornfully
Alázais the fair is dead,
And wait my tears to see!—

"But no more mine eyes reply
Than when came the dreary word,
One had seen King Richard die,
One Toulouse's knightly lord.

"They say the King of Aragon
The great Alfonso is at rest—
And now they heap the clay upon
Alázais—God ease her breast!"—

Thenceforth at his approach the laughter died
Among the playful groups of novices;
The older fathers in their lighter moods
Avoided him; and as the days wore on
He grew to be a figure strange, remote,
Robed with an undefined authority.
Thus when the aged Abbot died, the monks
Proclaimed him mitred Lord of Torondet.

For evil days had come upon Provence,
And strenuous hands were needed at the helm
To guide the holy ship of Christ amid
The waves that rose against it. Christendom
Was whispering with scandals grave and dread.
That at Toulouse the spectre of the Fiend
Had raised again his Manichean horns.
Within the town the brothers had been met
With jeers and insults, churches been profaned
And tabernacles rifled. There were tales
Of fearful rites among the hills by night;
The woods were red with fires; by the road
Strange voices came and went, and sometimes shrieked
Their blasphemies against the gateside rood.
By the red trails from Rome the haughty train
Of legates came and went in flaming haste;
And messengers rushed daily from Toulouse
Bearing Count Raimon's parleys with the Pope.
Until one night upon the abbey gate
Thundered the knocker and the porter came
To rouse him in his cell, with messages
For Abbot Folquet sent by Innocent,
Sealed with the signet of the Fisherman.
And Folquet rose and read the ordinance,—
That he set forth at once unto Toulouse,
Drag down the traitor Bishop from his chair,
On his own finger slip the amethyst,
And hold the town in fee for Mother Church.
Then the first joy that he had known for years
Seized on his heart, and in a fevered haste

He summoned forth the Abbot's coach of state,
Bade the roused brothers to attend his will,
And without scrip or luggage rode away
Before the morn could break. But as he went
He heard the matin bells ring out afar
Behind him in the tower of Torondet;
And in his memory wakened that strange night
When first their peace and sweetness wooed his soul.
For now it seemed that after all these years
'Twas fated he should know their calm no more.
He saw the sun rising on the hills
And bowed his head in mystical commune
With his far brothers offering now their Mass
In unison for him and his emprise.

Full bitter the emprise: Toulouse, the fair
Rose-garden city of the South, was now
A thicket full of thorns for all its blooms.
He who sat down beneath its mitre's weight
Bore a great load of sorrows and chagrins;
For here the ancient East had spread its nets,
And rebels and heresiarchs had crouched
Beneath the favor of successive lords
Whose minds were sole intent to profit hard
And sow their fertile fields of France with seeds
Of pleasure light and carnal indolence.
Like thunder from a summer cloud, the voice
Of Rome had rumbled o'er the land, to warn
Of storms to come; the vineyard laughter brought
The answer of Provence; the gathering gloom

Of hurricanes grew darker, yet the sound
Of lutes, like the cicadas, never ceased.
The Legates came and went;—"Make straight His paths!"—
They cried— "We are the cherubim that wield
The flaming sword to guard the tree of life!
Behold, He saith, 'I will My vengeance wreak
Upon my enemies and will reward
All them that hate me!'—Lo, we sound for you
The trumpets of the Lord!—'Let all flesh know
That I the Lord have drawn my sword from forth
Its sheath; nor shall return it more!'—
Divide not ye His seamless robe!"—Vainly
Count Raimon countered and excused in vain.
"Cast forth your Cathari's accurséd spawn;
You nurse a cancer-spot within our breast;
We are the Law and Prophets; we must keep
Eternal covenant with the Christian world!"—
But he replied: "They are good men and free;
I cannot force their souls; your churchmen laws
Are not for all. And I am sovereign here!"—
So the French King Augustus, knowing well
His feeble powers over proud Toulouse,
Held back, the while a harvest crop of crimes
Grew daily greater till that fatal day
The dirk from out Count Raimon's court cut down
The Papal Legate Peter; then the steeds
Of Montfort whinnied on the blast for blood
And vengeance. Folquet on his purple throne
Sat like a spider 'mid a tangled net,

Not all his weaving but the hellish woof
Of doom impending.—
The Crusaders paused:—
"Shall we leave here a nest of infamies
That blacken all our Christendom, to fare
Abroad for Paynims?—Here a band that scorns
Our Church, our Christ, our sacraments and laws?—
A brood unnatural that threats our state
With dissolution, that no contract-oath
Or true confession can control, nor priest
Can serve, nor sacrifice command?—Their death!
Their death! or penance! For we are the law
On earth as it is in heaven!"—
Fury spread
Its blast-wide wings, the warring hordes swept on
Through burning cities, fallen walls, and towers,
And blackened regions red with streams of blood,
While Carcassonne and ravaged Beziers shone
Like two red wounds upon the brows of Time.
Then Folquet riding closed within his coach
Sought his grim, hostile city of Toulouse,
His nose grown thin and sharp, his eyes on fire,
His jaws set hard to serve his priestly task,
His hands gripped firmly on the crozier staff.
Beside him Brother Dominic, clad in white,
Had heard the mocking lutes within the court
Strike off his ancient lay, "The Blossom Time
Of Spring." And Folquet sighed: "Shall nevermore
My ears be free of that poor feeble song?
We have stripped off the splendor of our state,

Put by our robes and trains and outriders,
And driven forth all that would a scandal give
To our opponents here or make their poor
False argument for wrong. Still, still that song
Is flung at me whene'er I venture forth—
A pitiless rejoinder from the flesh
When I would urge the spirit's higher call.
From out Count Raimon's window leaned a form,
A woman such as men call beautiful
Who cast upon me flowers and smiling cried,—
'For thee, thou "Prince of Song"!' And I grew weak
As through my heart the thorn went straight to pierce
My very life. But come, no more of this,—
This day I come my deacons to ordain;
But first have asked Count Raimon, thrice accursed
By Mother Church, to leave the town awhile,
So I may act in my episcopal rite.
This can he scarce refuse. I now await
His answer." Soon within the Bishop's hall
There came with escort a young troubadour;
His locks all curling gold, his lute strung high
Against his thigh; he read in lisping tones
Count Raimon's answer— "Bishop, you who were
In olden time our Prince of Song, and now
By voice of Rome empowered would wage a war
For Rome, although a stranger seated in
Our citadel,—know that Count Raimon here
Is sovereign Lord,—nor thinks he to fare forth
To hunt without the city, nor to feast
Within the woods; for there's a flock abroad

Of wolves too ravenous and hunger-led;
Nor is there tourney, nor a court of love
Now that the Prince of Song would scorn the lute.
Therefore Count Raimon bids Don Folquet rise
Betimes tomorrow, and go forth himself
With all his traitorous White Company,
And leave Toulouse and its true citizens
Free of their presence. Let him join outside
With Montfort's legions waiting at Lavaur.
There shall he be at home and find his will
Accomplished as he wishes. At the break
Of day our gates shall open. Issue forth
If you do value life!"—
And Folquet rose
From out his seat and answered,—"Messenger,
Go back to Count Raimon and say that I,
Once Prince of Song, am now his Bishop here.
It was not he who made me Bishop, nor
Have I come hither on account of him.
I came not as intruder, nor by force
Of any earthly prince, nor will I go
Because he orders. Let him do his worst!
Ready am I to know his knife, that I
May gain my glory through the chalice blood
Of my deliverance! I am all alone,—
Unarmed,—so let him come. For I am called
The Bishop of the Devils—be it so—
For here are devils, and I am their Lord!"—
But Raimon stirred not forth against him now,
Though for a month he waited. Then at last

Came Brother Dominic unto him and said:
" 'Tis time to go; the city's doom is sealed;
Let us prepare, and lead our Christians forth!"—
All through the night the rumor ran apace
From church to convent and to church again:
"Prepare to leave Toulouse; the Lord hath given
His word; let us go forth in peace and right!"—
And through the streets and squares as morning broke
The banners of the faith spread on the breeze
And a great throng of folk, layman and clerk,
Marched amid hymning toward the outer gate.
And every priest and monk went up their shrines,
Opened the tabernacle door and took the Host
And chalice on their breast and quenched the light
Before the altars—and toward the gate
Went forth in solemn ritual pomp. And last
Came Folquet in his mitre crowned, his cope
All gold around him, pressed against his breast
The Sacrament and monstrance from the shrine
Of the cathedral.
In his train there swarmed
His priests and monks and Dominic's throngs in white,
With women and their children, and the old;
While o'er his head his deacons newly made
Upheld the silken canopy that marked
The holiest point in the cortege. . . . And when
He reached the castle gates he paused and raised
His monstrance as a sign of warning there,—
When slowly on their hinges the great doors
Swung open, and within the courtyard wide

Knelt all Count Raimon's household on the stones;
And at their head the Count himself, amid
The womenfolk that made the scandals wing
Adown the whispering echoes of the world.
Don Folquet's cheek grew pale before the sight.
He placed the monstrance within Dominic's hands,
And strode across the gateway.—"Count Raimon,
And you, his servitors, what mockery
Of reverence is here? Have I not warned
In words of Holy Rome, that on your heads
The interdict would fall?—the while you laughed
And mocked the distant thunders of the Pope?
And you, Sire Count, have sent me messages,
Commanding me to go, but I, unarmed
Save by the Holy Ghost's supernal powers,
Have scorned your warrant and authority.
For there is none, save him in Rome, to give
Command to Bishop Folquet. By the right
Of God's appointed, have I come and stayed,
And still do hold the spiritual fief
Upon Toulouse!"—Count Raimon then arose,
"Bishop," he said, "we know no compeer here;
The sovereign county of Toulouse belongs
To us by right of our inheritance;
We have allowed the power of Rome to place
Upon our Bishop's throne an enemy,
No friend unto our customs of Toulouse,
An enemy within our citadel
To scheme for our undoing. Have we not
At various times sought at the Roman throne

For reconcilement, and done penance for
Our sins of flesh, and granted to the church
Her rights and privileges in our realms?"—
"Yes," cried Don Folquet,—"With your left hand out
To her, the while your right caressed your sins,
Fostered the Cathari's abhorréd bands;
Let loose their leprosy upon the world,
The while you turned upon your couch of lust
And feast and song. While we, the ministers
Of God's appointment, waged a losing war,
You fed the crumbs of favor to the beasts
Who would destroy our Church and Christendom!
Today, in joy, by our own will not yours,
We go to join our brothers of the Cross.
Your power is not for us; Rome has cut off
The stream of our obedience to your laws,
And you are outcast from her font of grace,—
You, and all these who serve you, are condemned
By interdict. There is your final doom!"—
"Nay, Bishop, we are Christians here, I swear
Again; go forth, if so you will, but leave
Some monk or priest with power to absolve
And consecrate the Host, for we are placed
In battle line to meet Don Simon's troops,
And fierce and terrible the fight must be,
And some shall fall beneath the deadly press,
And the priest's holiest office is to say
Last absolution"— "Will you then submit,"
Demanded Folquet, "to the Legate's powers,
Surrendering Toulouse and all your rights

Into the hands of Rome?" "You ask too great
A price," Count Raimon said, "we are today
But suppliants at the priestly doors for grace
Of spirit, not for temporal ordinance.
We have our foes political but choose
One God, one Cross, and one communion.
The temporal Rome against us wages war,
And we resist, but not the spiritual!—
Join ye our enemies, your friends outside,
But shut us not beyond the Christian fold!
Though warring, we are brothers in the blood
Of Christ!"—"Nay, Count," the Bishop answered him,
"Divide not God's appointment to His Church
With your own usurpation of a power
Which you have forfeited! To Cæsar, give
All that belongs to Cæsar,—nothing more!
You have usurped the right of Mother Church
To judge of things of dogma, rite,
And discipline. Your easy tolerance
Of vice and error have become your boast
Instead of shame. Some natural grace, some vice,
Some looseness in the life and creed of these
Your Catharists has led your sense astray;
But we, the God-appointed judges of the Church,
The guardians of His never-ceasing grace,
The wielders of His sole authority,
We do behold and judge them to the sword—
Not pitiless, for we have urged and prayed
For their conversion—but in vain! And now

Their doom has fallen—and your doom,
Lapped in your vices, with your mind on earth
And not upon eternal guidance placed—
Your doom, as well, O Count Raimon, is here!
So without blessing do I go my way;
And God goes with me! See, your churches bare,
Your tapers quenched, your blesséd stoups gone dry!
The child shall cry in vain to know the font;
The penitent turn vainly for the priest;
The dying find no blessing at the end!
Give me the monstrance of my God"— He took
The golden disc upon his breast again:—
"And now, my brothers, let us on our way!"—
Then silent walked he to the outer gate,
Where, lifting high the Host, he cried afar,—
"Jerusalem! Jerusalem! oh, why
Hast thou forsaken Me! Behold, Toulouse,
Thy doom is come upon thee! Like the dust
Before the wind the Angel of the Lord
Shall scatter thee! Remember Carcassonne!
Remember dread Beziers! Thy doom is come!"—
Then he was gone, the city streets grew still
And half deserted. Men looked fearful-eyed
At one another. On the hills the crash
Of far-off thunder trembled to their souls;
Great drops of rain—not blood as yet—
Splashed on the pavements. Wide the churches gaped
With doors unbarred and tabernacles bare
Of all their sacred store. One voice alone,

A sweet and tragic voice, came floating forth
Across the castle walls, like some calm bird
Amid the troubled branches ere the storm,
Singing unmoved "The Blossom Time of Spring."

TWO APPRECIATIONS OF THOMAS WALSH

THOMAS WALSH

By Edward L. Keyes

There are so few people whose memory is pure joy. The world is full of noble souls, saints, scientists, adventurers it could ill spare. But we daily mortals who amble our selfish and dingy way through life see little of the cloistered ones, and our breath gives out upon the mountain tops. Shelter and safety we clamor for, excepting in our rare moments of imperfect illumination. Then we seek for beauty. Beauty, in the nineties, when Thomas and I were young, walked abroad in trailing skirts and puff sleeves and teetering hats—nay, in bustles at the very earliest, while at home it nestled often in "Turkish corners" which, if paraded in our streets today, would no more draw the city in their wake than would Cimabue's Madonna.

I never saw Thomas halt and stammer as a tilted hat went by, or a puffed sleeve. In his latter days he would have decorated a Turkish corner, rather. But I do not recall that he reveled in one. Yet if one's memory lingers affectionately about him now it is because his life personified the adoration of beauty, the worship of the rare perfection, the elusive ideal—that which eye hath

not seen, nor ear heard, that which is so exquisite as to be all but non-existent, yet which enters into the mind of every man in its moments of elevation from the terrestrial, be he never so grotesque or vain or brutish.

Sheltered he was always. He knew no days of squalor or need to sharpen his appreciation of what he did not possess. Indeed he desired no possessions. He could and did give his most treasured belongings with the free gesture that sought as reward only a glance of the eye. His goods were at home wherever they were beloved. Selfishness he knew not.

But he was self-made in rebelliousness against any rule or restraint that cramped the breath of freedom. Never did sensitive disposition send a mortal into blacker rages and yet spare a certain balanced critical spirit to guide his utterings. The tongue of Thomas flaying an opponent was a terrible weapon.

His youth must have been a tumultuous one under the eye of a father with a sense of order, but this father was lost to him ere he reached Georgetown in his teens. There I first met him. At that time he had made his beginnings. Slim, black-haired, with beautiful teeth and slender hands and feet, of which physical perfections he was ever vain, he had already marked his future by reading the world's great epics, or what he accounted such—Camoens and Firdausi as well as Homer, Virgil and Milton. In class he was devoted to English and well trained in the classics, but appropriately void of mathematics. Already a poet, his reactions to geometry and algebra were lines of which a few are still remembered:

About his boots
Quadratic roots
Had lovingly entwined. . . .

And like a surd
He lies interred,
Monomially dead.

These were the first twitterings of Doctor Angelicus. Indeed it was not until the literary birth of the Doctor in the "Quiet Corner" of the *Commonweal* that Thomas began to take his beautiful gift of fun as a serious responsibility. Through life, it is true, he bore his Celtic wit and gaiety as a plume. It was his unfailing good humor that made him the favorite dinner guest. Flash, rally, reminiscence poured from him while he savored his food and drink with a hearty sweep that was the despair of us less stout trenchermen. Gargantuan digestion! In his youth on a hot summer day he once emptied a water cooler. And in later days when prohibition hounded the lot of us, it was not he that slid under the table. Time appeased his love of sweets, but in his salad days he could encompass a pound of Huyler's candy and shake it down with a five-mile walk. Thus he expanded to the magnificence we knew.

Ah, to see him stroll the Avenue again in genial state, inspired by the crowd, townsman that he was! Leisurely he went, stopping to admire the shop windows, his spirit reaching out to every trace of youth that might be passing—for apart from a certain appreciation of church splendor and ceremonial, his real interest was in

budding humanity. Youth, youth, was his cry. He surrounded himself with young men, all of whom called him Thomas. Age sated him with his own people, and one heard him addressed as Thamas or Thomás by fair or brown-skinned foreigners. These strays in a chill country found his hand always sympathetic, ready to share purse and provender, kindly, easy, merry. He was the patron of youth, for his heart was young.

Run through his published verse and you will find little of this merriment in it, alas! His classic education combined with adoration for his art to exclude humor, as his love for his mother excluded the tense rush of passion.

Love, you are late, too late—

That was as near as he got to it.

Free, self-made he was, as are great minds. Holy Mother Church captured him in youth, else would he have been the rudest of rebels instead of her stoutest champion. He never could be driven to work. Long hours at his verse, at his Fray Luis, at his *Commonweal,* he could take as play so long as they did not arouse him before noon or dull his enjoyment of the hours between midnight and the morning star. The *Commonweal* was the only shop that ever captivated him. Ambition, wealth, position, moved him not.

Not by the highways and the streets, dear friend,
Where kings and merchants and their minions wend,
But by the little pathways let us go—
Lone ways that only humble footsteps know.

Thomas, I laugh through the tears—as I know you would have me laugh—at the outward incongruity, and yet—

How like the rose to bloom a day
And leave but memory behind
Of where among the thorns she twined,
Frail visitant that might not stay!
What godhead grants the thorns delay
To riot in their native clay
While beauty passes on the wind—
How like the rose!

"MAN ALIVE!"

By Michael Williams

Now that I am asked to write something about Thomas Walsh for this book which brings together so much of the best of his written work, I find it impossible not to be personal in what I say, not only about Thomas Walsh but also about myself in relation to him. Yet it is my desire to say only what may help to make the readers of the book who did not know the author, realize the loss that both literature and life have suffered by his premature death. Why, therefore, I ask myself, as my readers well may ask, should I bring in anything personal, at least anything personal about anybody other than Thomas Walsh himself?

But perhaps this fact, which was not reached by any deliberate process of thought but which presented itself spontaneously and with a force not to be denied, more fully expresses perhaps the most important truth about Thomas Walsh than any other fact could do. For I think my experience in this matter is the common experience of all who knew the man. It is impossible for me to think abstractedly about Thomas Walsh. We seem to see him again when we think about him; we

almost hear his voice; certainly, we savor again his rich abundance of life. My experience in this matter proves again what was always being shown when he was among us: that is, the great power which was his of entering into personal communication with his friends, even with his mere acquaintances; yes, even with casual strangers, his fellow pilgrims of all sorts and conditions, met here and there by him as he passed on his way. It was not only that he gave himself freely, more particularly, of course, to his friends—giving them abundantly and without apparent effort of his keen interest in them, and in their problems, giving his sympathy, his understanding, his charm, his humor and wit—it was his even more remarkable ability to stir up and bring into play the personal powers of those with whom he mingled.

Thomas Walsh was the very reverse of what we usually consider a "dominating personality," or a "forceful individual." He was anything rather than intrusive. Nobody I know could receive from others as well as give of himself with anything like the same innate and unforced willingness. Nevertheless, without strain or ostentation, he made his effect wherever he was, under all circumstances. His power in this respect was prodigious. When you met him, even if but casually or briefly, he inevitably woke you up. He brought forward, as if to meet him, the real you—your own self, no matter what you were—whether you were a fellow-writer and a boon companion, or somebody in business, a priest, a rabbi, a girl clerk, a policeman, a waiter, or a scholar—any man, woman or child, old or young. Nobody could

help but respond to his own most natural and constant aliveness. Never have I known anyone who was so much alive. He might well have been the model for Chesterton's hero: "Manalive"!

In a world where men and women too generally become effaced as to their personal qualities, like coins so rubbed and jostled in the barter of life that their personal images, and their own individual values, become dim and dull and even indistinguishable, Thomas Walsh was like some gold coin amid pewter and copper—always vividly himself, always uniquely a person, and indeed very much of a personage. And the rest of us could not help but play up to him; not consciously, not in envy or emulation, but in response to his own vital interest in other people. And when I ask myself what was the secret of this power, even while I remember very clearly that Thomas Walsh was anything rather than sentimental, that he was the very reverse of a conventional pious person, I can still only consider this quality in him as being in all reality the expression of that love of the neighbor which his own religion places only second to the love of God.

It was a rich, ever-flowing, scarcely ever ruffled current of human charity which flowed from him and seemed to accompany him. Nobody ever loved to gossip more about other people, his rich appreciation of human failings and oddities being ever zestful; but never was there any malice in what he said. It was rather another proof of how well he could like people, and understand them and appreciate them, in spite of any failings

or frailties which he may have remarked, and which for him at least never interfered with his friendships or his appreciations. It was as if he had achieved—no doubt not without steady effort, yet certainly without suffering strain or showing any nervous derangement—so complete and harmonious a development of his mind and of his soul that he had accomplished an integration of all the elements of his personality, so that no part of his nature ever seemed to fail him, or ever to become dull or tired.

How well I remember our first meeting. He had written to me after the appearance of one of my books, to tell me how interested he had been in certain passages, and inviting me to meet him. For Thomas Walsh, I feel certain, that meeting was simply one more in his innumerable series of acquaintances with his fellow-writers. It developed, I am glad to say, into something more worthwhile than that, certainly for me, and I trust for him; but for me, even at the beginning, the acquaintance was momentous. My book (which, under the circumstances of what I am now trying to do, I may perhaps be pardoned for mentioning) told the story of an adventure in religious conversion. Its author had come out of the wasteland of modern skepticism into the strange country of Catholicism. Thomas Walsh was the first of its literary inhabitants whom I had met. It was in keeping with the habits of Thomas Walsh that we should have met for that first time at the luncheon table. The memories of all his friends must constantly present pictures of him sitting at dinner or luncheon

or supper—but certainly not at breakfast, unless you were up all night with him. For never was there a more convivial soul. In his private calendar every day seemed to be a feast day. Sometimes it might seem that he was always on the go; that his life was social in the most literal of senses, and that parties instead of persons were all that mattered to him. But it was not so. Even as at that first luncheon table his talk was such as could only have come from a mind strictly disciplined, from a memory saturated with culture, so his books and even the most ephemeral of his writings have that substantial quality which belongs only to writing which has its roots in deep study, which requires assiduous and constant scholarship for its cultivation. For in relation to his work, this urbane man of the world was indeed a good deal of the solitary monk. Many lonely hours at his desk balanced and compensated for his never-wearied social existence.

Mr. Bunker's memoir is sufficient to prove Thomas Walsh's considerable achievement in literature. A part of it, a most delightful part, seems to be connected with the most charming part of his social gifts, for it seemed to flow from him almost like improvisation. But all of it is based solidly upon study and knowledge, and an intensive appreciation of all that is most enduring in the classic literature of several languages, as well in the best of contemporary work.

Thomas Walsh appears to me a figure of lasting importance. He represented Catholic civilization. He was untouched by one of the worst and most corrupting in-

fluences of the wrong sort of modernity, which I think to be vulgarity. There is a high quality of virile refinement in his work despite all its richness of color and its amazing sympathy with human nature, which expresses a trained austerity of soul. Those who know his deep interest in the mystical poets of the Church will understand the sources of this rare quality. What this quality, combined with his thorough knowledge of his Church, and its history, its ritual, its literature, its organized system as well as its spirit, meant to his colleagues of the *Commonweal* can never wholly be related, no matter how strict a duty it is to acknowledge it. It was not merely what he wrote for our paper, of which from the first number he was one of the editors, but it was his influence in council, the contribution of his exquisite taste in the selection of manuscripts, particularly poetry, and of his inflexible though kindly insistence upon the maintenance of high standards, and the quest for quality and genuine value—these were his contributions, not only to the *Commonweal,* but to the whole literary movement in the United States, secular as well as Catholic. In this, as in his life, Thomas Walsh's religion was wholly Catholic, because it was never in any sense sectarian. I cannot help but think that his influence upon the future is secure. If I had anything to do with the curricula of our colleges, I would insist upon the study of Thomas Walsh. And this would seem to be the mission of this book: to carry on the work of his life.